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Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson

At the Age of 30.

THE LIFE OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

BY GRAHAM BALFOUR

IN TWO VOLUMES WITH PORTRAITS

II

PUBLISHED IN NEW YORK BY CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS 1905

B
Stevenson, R.L.

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CHAPTER XI

BOURNEMOUTH—1884–87

"This is the study where a smiling God
Beholds each day my stage of labour trod,
And smiles and praises, and I hear him say:
'The day is brief; be diligent in play.'"

R. L. S.

THE next three years Stevenson was to spend in England—the only time he was ever resident in this country—and then Europe was to see him no more. At first sight the chronicle of this time would seem to be more full of interest than any other period of his life. *Treasure Island*, his "first book," had just been given to the world; the year after his return *A Child's Garden of Verses* and *Prince Otto* were published, and *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Kidnapped* appeared in the following year. To have written almost any one of these brilliant yet widely dissimilar books would be to challenge the attention of the most distinguished contemporary men of letters; and to meet Stevenson at this time was instantly to acknowledge the quality and charm of the man and the strong fascination of his talk. For the whole of the period he made his home at Bournemouth, within easy reach of London visitors; and in London itself Mr. Colvin (who had now become Keeper of Prints at the British Museum) not only had a house always open to him, but delighted to bring together those who by their own powers were best fitted to appreciate his society.

Yet the reality is disappointing. To produce brilliant writings it is not necessary at the time to live an exciting or even a very full life, and Stevenson's health deprived him more and more of the ordinary incidents which happen to most men in their daily course. Looking back on this period in after-days, he cries out: "Remember the pallid brute that lived in Skerryvore like a weevil in a biscuit." Nearly all the time which was not devoted to contending with illness was taken up with his work, and as he rarely left home without returning in a more or less disabled condition, he stayed in his own house and led the most retired of lives. Even there it was no uncommon experience for a visitor who had come to Bournemouth specially to see him to find himself put to the door, either on the ground of having a cold, to the contagion of which it was unsafe for Stevenson to be exposed, or because his host was already too ill to receive him.

But this is to anticipate matters. On his return from Royat he was unable to be present at the matinée on July 2nd, at the Prince's Theatre,[1] when the Deacon was played by Mr. Henley's brother. The play had been given at Bradford eighteen months before, and during the summer of 1883 had been acted by a travelling company some forty times in Scotland and the North of England without any marked success. It was in the gallery of one of the houses where it was performed that the complaint was heard during the performance of another piece: "A dunna what 's coom to Thayter Royal. Thar 's been na good moorder there for last six months"; and the Deacon's fate may not have

[1] Now the Prince of Wales' Theatre.

been up to the usual standard. The play was now received in London with interest, and regarded as full of promise by critics who knew better what to expect of it, but the lack of stage experience told against it, and it has not been revived in this country.

Having passed a few days in a hotel at Richmond, Stevenson and his wife went down to Bournemouth, where Lloyd Osbourne had for some months past been at school. After staying at a hotel, and trying first one and then another set of lodgings on the West Cliff, at the end of October they migrated into a furnished house in Branksome Park. The doctors whom he consulted were equally divided in their opinions, two saying it would be safe for him to stay in this country, while two advised him to go abroad; and in the end he yielded only to the desire to be near his father, who, though still at work, was evidently failing fast.

Meanwhile the first two months at Bournemouth were spent chiefly in the company of Mr. Henley, and were devoted to collaboration over two new plays. The reception of *Deacon Brodie* had been sufficiently promising to serve as an incentive to write a piece which should be a complete success, and so to grasp some of the rewards which now seemed within reach of the authors. They had never affected to disregard the fact that in this country the prizes of the dramatist are out of all proportion to the payment of the man of letters, and already in 1883 Stevenson had written to his father: "The theatre is the gold-mine; and on that I must keep an eye." Now that they were again able to meet, and to be constantly together, the friends embarked upon some of the schemes they had projected

long ago, and no doubt had talked over at Nice at the beginning of the year. By October the drafts of *Beau Austin* and *Admiral Guinea*[1] were completed and set up in type; and in the following spring, at the suggestion of Mr. Beerbohm Tree, the two collaborators again set to work and produced their English version of *Macaire*.

These were to have been but the beginning of their labours, but more necessary work intervened, and the plays were never resumed.[2]

It may be convenient here to round off the history of Stevenson's dramatic writings: early in 1887 he helped his wife with a play, *The Hanging Judge*, which was not completed at the time and has never yet been printed. Except for an unfinished fragment, intended for home representation at Vailima, he never again turned his hand to any work for the stage. *Beau Austin* was produced at the Haymarket Theatre in 1890, *Admiral Guinea* and *Macaire* have since been performed, and all the plays written in partnership with Mr. Henley have thus been seen upon the stage, though

[1] *Letters*, ii. 362.

[2] A list in Stevenson's writing shows some of their projects at the time, though it is certain that these had not been worked out, and we may doubt whether they would ever have been seriously considered. "Farmer George" was to have covered the whole reign of George the Third, ending with a scene in which the mad king recovered for a while his reason:—

Deacon Brodie: Drama in Four Acts and Ten Tableaux.
Beau Austin: Play in Four Acts.
Admiral Guinea: Melodrama in Four Acts.
Honour and Arms: Drama in Three Acts and Five Tableaux.
The King of Clubs: Drama in Four Acts.

none of them have kept it. The want of practical stage-craft may partly be to blame, and it must be remembered that Stevenson, at any rate, had not been inside a theatre since his return from America; but their chief interest lies in their literary quality, and it is to be feared that Mr. Archer was premature in his declaration that the production of *Beau Austin* showed triumphantly that "the aroma of literature can be brought over the footlights with stimulating and exhilarating effect."[1]

As soon as the two finished plays were laid aside, husband and wife began to put together the second series of *New Arabian Nights* from the stories which Mrs. Stevenson had made up to while away the hours of illness at Hyères. Stevenson wrote the passages relating to Prince Florizel and collaborated in the remainder; but the only complete story of his invention in the book was "The Explosive Bomb": by which he designed "to make dynamite ridiculous, if he could not make it horrible."

Meanwhile, on receiving an application from the pro-

Pepys' Diary: Comedy.
The Admirable Crichton: Romantic Comedy in Five Acts.
Ajax: Drama in Four Acts.
The Passing of Vanderdecken: (Legend!) in Four Acts.
Farmer George: Historical Play in Five Acts.
The Gunpowder Plot: Historical Play in
Marcus Aurelius: Historical Play
The Atheists: Comedy.
The Mother-in-Law: Drama.
Madam Fate: Drama in a Prologue and Four Acts.
Madam Destiny:

[1] The *World*, 12th November, 1890.

prietor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* for a Christmas story, he attempted to produce a new tale for the occasion. It proved, however, what, in the slang of the studio, he called a "machine," and "Markheim," which was now ready, being too short, as a last resource he bethought himself of "The Body Snatcher," one of the "tales of horror" written at Pitlochry in 1881, and then "laid aside in a justifiable disgust." It was not one of his greater achievements, and would probably have excited little comment, had it not been for the gruesome and unauthorized methods of advertisement.

Soon afterwards he successfully concluded negotiations for a Life of the Duke of Wellington, which he was commissioned to write for the series of "English Worthies," edited by Mr. Andrew Lang. The military genius of the strategist had long dazzled Stevenson, who had also been deeply fascinated by the study of his character. I will not say that to him the man who wrote the Letters to Miss J. was as remarkable as the victor of Waterloo, but it is certain that the great soldier became twice as interesting on account of that marvellous correspondence. According to Mr. Gosse, special emphasis was to be given to the humour of Wellington, and certainly the biography was by no means to be restricted to his military career. Three years before, Stevenson had written to his father about a book on George the Fourth, perhaps the *Greville Memoirs:* "What a picture of Hell! Yet the punishment of the end seemed more, if possible, than he had deserved. Iron-handed Wellington crushing him in his fingers; contempt, insult, disease, terror—what a haunted, despicable scene!"

The book, however, although it was in Stevenson's mind for several years and was advertised as "in preparation," was never written, or, so far as I know, even begun. Not the least interesting part of the whole story is the picture of Stevenson sitting down to address a letter of inquiries to Mr. Gladstone, for whose political career he had always the most complete aversion, and finding himself, somewhat to his dismay, overcome with an involuntary reverence for the statesman who embodied so much of England's past.

Casting about for a new story, he turned in February to the highroad, that to him and to his father before him had for long been one of the richest fields of romance. When, to his delight, he had first found his powers of narrative in *Treasure Island*, and discovered what possibilities lay before him of writing for boys the kind of stories he liked himself, he announced with glee to Mr. Henley that his next book was to be "Jerry Abershaw: A Tale of Putney Heath."[1] He was also to write "The Squaw Men: or, The Wild West," and of this one chapter was actually drafted. The new venture was, however, called "The Great North Road," but, like *St. Ives* in later days, it rapidly increased in proportions and in difficulty of management. So at the end of the eighth chapter it was relinquished for *Kidnapped* and apparently dropped out of sight. Already in its beginnings it showed an increase of skill in dealing with Nance Holdaway, who foreshadowed other heroines yet to come.

By the end of January so successful had the winter

[1] *Letters*, i. 223. Cf. "A Gossip on Romance."

been that Thomas Stevenson bought a house at Bournemouth as a present for his daughter-in-law. Its name was forthwith changed to Skerryvore, in commemoration of the most difficult and beautiful of all the lighthouses erected by the family.[1] It was no great distance from where they were already living: a modern brick house, closely covered with ivy; and from the top windows it was possible to catch a glimpse of the sea. There was half an acre of ground, very charmingly arranged, running down from the lawn at the back, past a bank of heather, into a chine or small ravine full of rhododendrons, and at the bottom a tiny stream.

Mrs. Stevenson at once started off for Hyères, whence she returned with their books and other belongings. The new house, however, was not ready for their occupation until the end of April, and when the move was made, to no one did it bring greater satisfaction than to Stevenson.

Wanderer as he was, and still gave the impression of being, he entered into his new property with a keenness of delight that must have amused those of his friends who remembered his former disparagement of all household possessions.[2] "Our drawing-room is now a place so beautiful that it 's like eating to sit in it. No other room is so lovely in the world; there I sit like an old Irish beggarman's cast-off bauchle in a palace throne-room. Incongruity never went so far; I blush for the figure I cut in such a bower."

The large dovecot is commemorated in *Underwoods;* the garden was an endless pleasure to Mrs. Stevenson,

[1] See vol. i. p. 11. [2] Vol. i. p. 176.

and having long been the domain of "Boguey" in his lifetime, became at last his resting-place. Having been sent to hospital to recover from wounds received in battle, he broke loose, in his maimed state attacked another dog more powerful than himself, and so perished. His master and mistress were inconsolable, and never, even in Samoa, could bring themselves to allow any successor.

I have already referred to the easy access to Bournemouth, which was, of course, a prime consideration with his parents. But Stevenson's friends had seen little of him for several years past, so in this also there was a welcome change from Hyères. Nearly all the old and tried companions whom I have mentioned came to Skerryvore during these years: R. A. M. Stevenson and his wife, and his sister, Mrs. de Mattos, and her children; Miss Ferrier, Mr. Baxter, Professor Jenkin and Mrs. Jenkin, Mr. Colvin, and Mr. Henley all paid more or less frequent visits. Among the newcomers were Mr. Sargent, who twice came to paint his host's portrait; Mr. James Sully, an old friend at the Savile Club; Mr. William Archer, who owed his first coming to his severe but inspiring analysis of Stevenson, and remained as one of the most valued of his critics and appreciative of his friends; and last and most welcome of the admissions into the inmost circle, his very dear friend, Mr. Henry James.

One of the most frequent visitors was R. A. M. Stevenson, who had, after some time, decided to give up the thankless task of producing pictures for the public which were not those he wanted to paint, and to use his technical knowledge and matchless powers

of exposition in the criticism of art. That other art of writing, however, which Louis had spent his life in learning, could not be mastered in a day for the purposes of journalism even by so brilliant a talker as Bob, and it fell to Louis and Mr. Henley to give him many hints and put him through an apprenticeship in the technical part of the new profession in which he so rapidly made his mark.

Nor were the residents of Bournemouth to be overlooked, although (besides Dr. Scott, to whom *Underwoods* was chiefly dedicated, and Mrs. Boodle and her daughter, the "Gamekeeper" of the *Letters*) close friendship was confined to two families—Sir Henry Taylor and his wife and daughters, and Sir Percy and Lady Shelley. Sir Percy, the son of the poet, was devoted to yachting and the theatre (especially melodrama), and his genial, kindly nature, in which shrewdness and simplicity were most attractively blended, endeared him to his new as to all his old friends, while Lady Shelley, no less warm-hearted, took the greatest fancy to Louis, and discovering in him a close likeness to her renowned father-in-law, she forthwith claimed him as her son.

But it was the Taylors with whom he lived in more intimate relations in spite of the impression he seems here again to have produced of a being wholly transitory and detached, a bird of passage resting in his flight from some strange source to regions yet more unknown. Sir Henry indeed died almost before the friendship had commenced, but Lady Taylor and her daughters continued to live at Bournemouth until long after Skerryvore was transferred to other hands.

But before Sir Henry Taylor passed away, Stevenson had suffered a more unexpected and a heavier blow in the death of his friend Fleeming Jenkin on June 12th, 1885. Only once again in his life was he to lose one very near to him, and the subsequent task of writing his friend's life not only raised his great admiration, but even deepened the regret for his loss.

To some of his friends in these days, and chiefly to Miss Una Taylor, Mrs. Jenkin, Mr. Henley, and his cousin Bob, he owed the revival of his interest in music, which now laid greater hold upon him than ever before. He began to learn the piano, though he never reached even a moderate degree of skill; he flung himself with the greatest zeal into the mysteries of composition, wherein it is but honest to say that he failed to master the rudiments. "Books are of no use," he says; "they tell you how to write in four parts, and that cannot be done by man. Or do you know a book that really tells a fellow? I suppose people are expected to have ears. To my ear a fourth is delicious, and consecutive fifths the music of the spheres. As for hidden fifths, those who pretend to dislike 'em I can never acquit of affectation. Besides (this in your ear) there is nothing else in music; I know; I have tried to write four parts."

His delight and eagerness were enhanced rather than decreased by difficulties, and in a period of his life when nearly all pleasures were taken away from him, he was able at least to sit at the piano and create for the ear of his imagination some of the heavenly joys it is the prerogative of music to bestow.

Besides enjoying the company of his friends, he made good use of his few other opportunities. Since at

Bournemouth his health hardly ever allowed him to pass beyond the gate of Skerryvore, the chance seldom presented itself to him of meeting men of any other class whose lives lay outside his own, but those who fell in his way received unusual attention at his hands, more especially if they possessed originality or any independence of character. Thus, the barber that came to cut his hair, the picture-framer, the "vet" who attended "Boguey," each in their different way were originals to a man whose life was so secluded; their coming was welcomed, they invariably stayed to meals, and, sooner or later, told the story of their lives.

Such was his own life, and such were his surroundings at this period; and yet to leave the picture without a word of warning would be wholly to misrepresent Stevenson. A popular novelist, toiling incessantly at his writing, and confined by ill-health almost entirely within the walls of a suburban villa at an English watering-place, is about as dreary a figure as could be formed from the facts. The details are as accurate as if they were in a realistic novel, and yet the essence is wholly untrue to life. It is necessary to insist again and again on the "spirit intense and rare," the courage, the vivacity, the restless intellect ever forming new schemes with unceasing profusion. There are people who might live a life of the wildest adventure, of the most picturesque diversity, and yet be dull. Stevenson could lie in a sick-room for weeks without speaking, and yet declare truly, as he asserted to Mr. Archer, "I never was bored in my life." When everything else failed, and he was entirely incapable of work, he would build card-houses, or lie in bed modelling small figures

of wax or clay, taking the keenest interest in either process. On being told that a friend of his "has fallen in love with stagnation," from his invalid chair he protests that the dream of his life is to be "the leader of a great horde of irregular cavalry," and his favourite attitude "turning in the saddle to look back at my whole command (some five thousand strong) following me at the hand-gallop up the road out of the burning valley by moonlight."[1] In him at least the romantic day-dream called out as completely the splendid virtues of courage and enterprise and resolution as he could ever have displayed them on the field of battle.

Illness and anxiety had, as he afterwards said, put an end to the happiness of Hyères, but he was maintaining the unequal fight with much of the spirit and gaiety that he always showed; his sufferings did not dull the kindliness and sympathy which largely formed the fascination of his character, unique, perhaps, in being at once so lovable and so brilliant.

In the meantime he was hard at work. His interest in all questions relating to the methods of literature was unfailing. A lecture from Sir Walter Besant and an answer by Mr. Henry James brought Stevenson in his turn into the pages of *Longman's Magazine* for December, 1884. In "A Humble Remonstrance" he urged the paramount claims of the "story" in fiction, and dwelt on the problems involved for the student of method. Several months later he followed this up by a most inspiring but more strictly professional disquisition on "The Technical Elements of Style," "the work of five days in bed," which appeared in the *Contemporary*

[1] *Letters*, i. 311.

Review for April. At the time it was ill received and generally misunderstood: it is, however, the result of long and close study, and is a singularly suggestive inquiry into a subject which has been considered too vague and difficult for analysis, at any rate since the days of the classical writers on rhetoric, whom Stevenson had never read. He continued to meditate and to develop his ideas, and during 1886 had even planned a course of lectures to be delivered in London to students of his art. So full of the subject was he that when this project was peremptorily forbidden by the doctors, he could not rest until he found a pupil to whom he could disburden himself of the ideas with which he was overflowing.

In March, 1885, *A Child's Garden of Verses* was published at last, after having been set up twice in proof. In April *Prince Otto* began to run in *Longman's Magazine*, coming out as a book in October, and by May *More New Arabian Nights* appeared. Soon after the issue of *Prince Otto*, Stevenson wrote to Mr. Henley: "I had yesterday a letter from George Meredith, which was one of the events of my life. He cottoned (for one thing), though with differences, to Otto; cottoned more than my rosiest visions had inspired me to hope; said things that (from him) I would blush to quote." Mr. Meredith's letter unfortunately has disappeared, but in another from the same source there occur these words: "I have read pieces of *Prince Otto*, admiring the royal manner of your cutting away of the novelist's lumber. Straight to matter is the secret. Also approvingly your article on style."

Still, with all this production, and with praise from

so high a quarter, it must not be supposed that Stevenson's writing as yet brought in any very extravagant payment. His professional income for this year, in point of fact, was exactly the same as that which he had averaged for the three years preceding, and amounted to less than four hundred pounds. Nor were his receipts materially increased before he reached America.

A subject much in his thoughts at this time was the duality of man's nature and the alternation of good and evil; and he was for a long while casting about for a story to embody this central idea. Out of this frame of mind had come the sombre imagination of "Markheim," but that was not what he required. The true story still delayed, till suddenly one night he had a dream. He awoke, and found himself in possession of two, or rather three, of the scenes in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.*

Its waking existence, however, was by no means without incident. He dreamed these scenes in considerable detail, including the circumstance of the transforming powders, and so vivid was the impression that he wrote the story off at a red heat, just as it had presented itself to him in his sleep.

"In the small hours of one morning," says Mrs. Stevenson, "I was awakened by cries of horror from Louis. Thinking he had a nightmare, I awakened him. He said angrily: 'Why did you wake me? I was dreaming a fine bogey tale.' I had awakened him at the first transformation scene."

Mr. Osbourne writes: "I don't believe that there was ever such a literary feat before as the writing of *Dr.*

Jekyll. I remember the first reading as though it were yesterday. Louis came downstairs in a fever; read nearly half the book aloud; and then, while we were still gasping, he was away again, and busy writing. I doubt if the first draft took so long as three days."

He had lately had a hemorrhage, and was strictly forbidden all discussion or excitement. No doubt the reading aloud was contrary to the doctor's orders; at any rate Mrs. Stevenson, according to the custom then in force, wrote her detailed criticism of the story as it then stood, pointing out her chief objection—that it was really an allegory, whereas he had treated it purely as if it were a story. In the first draft Jekyll's nature was bad all through, and the Hyde change was worked only for the sake of a disguise. She gave the paper to her husband and left the room. After a while his bell rang; on her return she found him sitting up in bed (the clinical thermometer in his mouth), pointing with a long denunciatory finger to a pile of ashes. He had burned the entire draft. Having realised that he had taken the wrong point of view, that the tale was an allegory and not another "Markheim," he at once destroyed his manuscript, acting not out of pique, but from a fear that he might be tempted to make too much use of it, and not rewrite the whole from a new standpoint.

It was written again in three days ("I drive on with Jekyll: bankruptcy at my heels"); but the fear of losing the story altogether prevented much further criticism. The powder was condemned as too material an agency, but this he could not eliminate, because in the dream it had made so strong an impression upon him.

"The mere physical feat," Mr. Osbourne continues,

"was tremendous; and instead of harming him, it roused and cheered him inexpressibly." Of course it must not be supposed that these three days represent all the time that Stevenson spent upon the story, for after this he was working hard for a month or six weeks in bringing it into its present form.

The manuscript was then offered to Messrs. Longmans for their magazine; and on their judgment the decision was taken not to break it up into monthly sections, but to issue it as a shilling book in paper covers. The chief drawbacks of this plan to the author were the loss of immediate payment and the risk of total failure, but these were generously met by an advance payment from the publishers on account of royalties. "The little book was printed," says Mr. Charles Longman, "but when it was ready the bookstalls were already full of Christmas numbers, etc., and the trade would not look at it. We therefore withdrew it till after Christmas. In January it was launched—not without difficulty. The trade did not feel inclined to take it up, till a review appeared in the *Times*[1] calling attention to the story. This gave it a start, and in the next six months close on forty thousand copies were sold in this country alone." Besides the authorised edition in America, the book was widely pirated, and probably not less than a quarter of a million copies in all have been sold in the United States.

Its success was probably due rather to the moral instincts of the public than to any conscious perception of the merits of its art. It was read by those who never read fiction, it was quoted in pulpits, and made the sub-

[1] The *Times*, January 25th, 1886.

ject of leading articles in religious newspapers. But the praise, though general, was not always according to knowledge, as, for example, in one panegyric, which lauded "a new writer, following in some detail, perhaps more of style than matter, the much regretted Hugh Conway." Yet even this criticism by no means represents the extreme range of its circulation.

But as literature also it was justly received with enthusiasm. Even Symonds, though he doubted "whether any one had the right so to scrutinise the abysmal depths of personality," admitted, "The art is burning and intense"; and the cry of horror and pain which he raised was in another sense a tribute to its success. "How had you the *ilia dura ferro et ære triplici duriora* to write *Dr. Jekyll?* I know now what was meant when you were called a sprite."[1]

In his "Chapter on Dreams," Stevenson has told his readers how the "brownies" suddenly became useful in providing him with stories for his books, but in spite of this statement it appears that besides *Jekyll and Hyde* there is only one other plot thus furnished which he ever actually completed. This was "Olalla," which appeared in the Christmas number of the *Court and Society Review;* in connection with it there arises an interesting point—an apparent plagiarism from the *Strange Story* by Lord Lytton. In either tale a squirrel is caught in the boughs of a tree by a semi-human youth and is shortly afterwards killed. It is true that Margrave slays the animal in revenge for a bite, whereas Stevenson's Felipe deliberately tortures the innocent creature, but the

[1] *John Addington Symonds: a Biography.* By Horatio F. Brown. London, Nimmo, 1895.

agility and the lack of humanity are the gist of both episodes. Beside the account in "Dreams" must be set Stevenson's own statement that his invention of Felipe was in part deliberate,[1] and it is impossible now to say whether (if the resemblance was more than accidental) the incident came back into the author's mind in his sleep or in his waking hours.

With the general result he was never well satisfied. To Lady Taylor he wrote: "The trouble with 'Olalla' is, that it somehow sounds false. . . . The odd problem is: What makes a story true? 'Markheim' is true; 'Olalla' false; and I don't know why, nor did I feel it while I worked at them; indeed I had more inspiration with 'Olalla,' as the style shows. I am glad you thought that young Spanish woman well dressed; I admire the style of it myself, more than is perhaps good for me; it is so solidly written. And that again brings back (almost with the voice of despair) my unanswerable: Why is it false?"

Kidnapped was begun in March, 1885, as another story for boys, and with as little premeditation as afterwards sufficed for its sequel. But when once the hero had been started upon his voyage, the tale was laid aside and not resumed until the following January, just after the publication of *Jekyll and Hyde*. No greater contrast can be imagined than the strong, healthy, open-air life of the new book and the dark fancies of the allegory which preceded it. Though the former was the product of his waking hours, it was no less spontaneous than a dream.

"In one of my books, and in one only, the characters

[1] *In the South Seas*, p. 353.

took the bit in their teeth; all at once, they became detached from the flat paper, they turned their backs on me and walked off bodily; and from that time my task was stenographic—it was they who spoke, it was they who wrote the remainder of the story."[1]

But within two months Stevenson began to flag, and not long after a visit for his father's sake to Matlock, where he had made small progress with the writing, he decided, at Mr. Colvin's suggestion, to break off with David's return to Edinburgh and leave the tale half told. Mr. Henderson gladly accepted the story for *Young Folks*, where it ran under Stevenson's own name from May to July, and was then published by Messrs. Cassell & Co.

It was dedicated to Mr. Baxter, whose permission was asked in a letter indicating its character and showing its author's capacity in dialect, if he had ever had a mind to let it run riot in his pages. "It 's Scōtch, sir: no strong, for the sake o' thae pock-puddens, but jist a kitchen o't, to leaven the wersh, sapless, fushionless, stotty, stytering South Scōtch they think sae muckle o'."

The whole took him, as he said, "probably five months' actual working; one of these months entirely over the last chapters, which had to be put together without interest or inspiration, almost word for word, for I was entirely worked out." But as a whole, the author thought it the best and most human work he had yet done, and its success was immediate with all readers. To mention two instances only:—Matthew Arnold, who apparently knew Stevenson's work little, if at all, before this, was at once filled with delight, and

[1] *Scribner's Magazine*, 1888, p. 764.

we are told that it was the last book Lord Iddesleigh was able to read with pleasure—"a volume," continues Mr. Lang, "containing more of the spirit of Scott than any other in English fiction."

The elder Stevenson had for several years, as we have seen, been declining in health and spirits, and the shadows began to close about his path. In 1885 he gradually reduced the amount of his work, though he still continued his practice, and could not altogether refuse the solicitations he received to appear as a scientific witness before Parliamentary Committees.

The tenderness of the relation between father and son now became pathetic in the extreme. As the old man's powers began to fail, he would speak to Louis as though he were still a child. When they went to the theatre together, and Louis stood up in his place, the father put his arm round him, saying: "Take care, my dearie, you might fall." At night, as he kissed his son, he would say reassuringly: "You 'll see me in the morning, dearie." "It was," says his daughter-in-law, "just like a mother with a young child."

It was chiefly in the summers and autumns that Louis left Bournemouth, but even then he rarely travelled any distance or was absent for any length of time. In 1885 he went to London in June, and then accompanied his wife on a last visit to Cambridge, to stay with Mr. Colvin, who was now resigning his professorship. In August he started for Dartmoor, but after meeting Mr. Thomas Hardy and his wife at Dorchester, was laid up with a violent hemorrhage at Exeter, in the hotel, and was compelled to remain there for several weeks before he was able to return home. In the following year he

went to town in June, and again in August, the latter time extending his journey to Paris in the company of his wife and Mr. Henley, to see their friends Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Low, then, after a long interval, revisiting France for the first time.

Meeting once more in their early haunts, the old friends revived many memories. One trivial reminiscence of this occasion is yet so characteristic of Stevenson, and so illustrates the working of his mind, that it may find a place here. The two friends, painter and writer, both possessing a fine palate for certain wines, had always laughed at one another's pretensions to such taste. In 1875 or 1876, soon after Mr. Low's marriage, he and his wife had gone to dine with Stevenson at the Musée de Cluny in the Boulevard St. Michel. Mr. Low hesitating for a moment in his choice of a wine, Stevenson turned to Mrs. Low, and on the spot made up and elaborately embellished a story of how her husband had once gone with him to dine at a restaurant, and had tasted and rejected every vintage the establishment was able to offer. At last—so the tale ran—the proprietor confessed that there was one bottle even finer in his cellar, which had lain there forty years, but that he was ready to give it up to such a master, although it was like surrendering a part of his life. A procession was formed, first the proprietor, then the cellarman, then the waiters of the establishment, and they all went down to the cellar to get the famous bottle. Back they came in the same order with the priceless treasure borne tenderly in the arms of the cellarman, a man with a long beard down to his waist, who had been so much in the cellar that the light made him blink. Slowly and rev-

erently they approached the table, and then they all sighed. The bottle was deliberately and ceremoniously uncorked, and the wine poured into small glasses, while the waiters looked on with breathless reverence. The two connoisseurs touched glasses and slowly carried them to their lips. There was absolute silence. All eyes were upon them, and when they drank deeply and expressed their satisfaction, the whole establishment heaved a sigh of relief.

Mrs. Low now reminded Stevenson of this story, and he, declaring it was no "story," but an historical account of what had actually happened, repeated it word for word as he had originally told it. When he came to the end, he added, "And the cellarman, overcome with emotion, dropped dead." As he said these words, he saw by his hearers' faces that this was a divergence from the original tale, and added quickly, "That about the cellarman is not *really* true!"

The quickness with which he caught the first sign of surprise at the only variation, and the readiness with which he recovered himself, were no less characteristic of Stevenson, as Mr. Low truly says, than the fact that the story of his invention took so concrete a form in his mind that, perhaps without its having recurred to his memory in all the interval, he was able to give the identical words and details as they had originally presented themselves to him.

An old project had this year been revived by Mr. Gilder of a boat-voyage down the Rhone to be written by Stevenson and illustrated by Mr. Low, but the former's health was now too precarious for even the most luxurious of such journeys. His visit to Paris,

however, was most successful, its chief event being a visit to Rodin the sculptor, to whom Mr. Henley introduced him. He came home in what was for him exceptionally good health; but returning in October to The Monument—his invariable name for Mr. Colvin's house at the British Museum—he did not escape so easily. The second holiday began delightfully, for it was on this occasion that he met some of the most distinguished of his elders in the world of letters and of art—especially, as Mr. Colvin records, Browning, Lowell, and Burne-Jones. But soon the visitor was taken ill, confined to bed, and unable to return home until the very end of November, when a succession of fogs made the danger of remaining in London greater than the risk of any journey.

This autumn there occurred a curious event in Stevenson's literary career, which is recorded only in a letter to his mother. "*5th Sept., 1886.*— . . . I have just written a French (if you please!) story for a French magazine! Heaven knows what it's like; but they asked me to do it, and I was only too pleased to try."

Mr. Osbourne and Mrs. de Mattos alone of the intimates of that time remember the fact, but whether the tale was ever despatched to its destination, or what that destination was, are questions that can no longer be answered. Although Stevenson had a wide and full vocabulary, and spoke French with a good accent and complete fluency, it seems certain that he had not the perfect knowledge of the language necessary for serious composition. He once wrote a French dedication in a book which he presented to Mrs. Low, prefacing it with the statement—"I am now going to make several

mistakes," as in fact, says her husband, he immediately proceeded to do.

By this time he had begun to write the *Memoir* of his friend Jenkin, the only biography which he ever actually carried to an end. A few months later Mrs. Jenkin came to Skerryvore to afford him what assistance he needed, and of his method of dealing with the work, she has given us a description.

"I used to go to his room after tea, and tell him all I could remember of certain times and circumstances. He would listen intently, every now and then checking me while he made a short note, or asking me to repeat or amplify what I had said, if it had not been quite clear. Next morning I went to him again, and he read aloud to me what he had written—my two hours of talk compressed into a page, and yet, as it seemed to me, all there, all expressed. He would make me note what he had written word by word, asking me, 'Does this express quite exactly what you mean?' Sometimes he offered me alternative words, 'Does this express it more truly?' If I objected to any sentence as not conveying my meaning, he would alter it again and again—unwearied in taking pains."

His life in England led him to take both in home and in foreign politics a closer interest than he had felt before. He was deeply moved during these years by two events, though neither in the end led to any action on his part, nor even an open declaration of his views. These were the death of Gordon and a case of boycotting women in Ireland.

In 1884 he had felt acutely the withdrawal of the garrisons from the Soudan. "When I read at Nice that

Graham was recalled from Suakim after all that butchery, I died to politics. I saw that they did not regard what I regarded, and regarded what I despised; and I closed my account. If ever I could do anything, I suppose I ought to do it; but till that hour comes, I will not vex my soul."

This was no passing wave of sentiment; Gordon's fate was laid even more deeply to heart, and one of the motives which induced Stevenson to begin his letters to the *Times* upon Samoan affairs was the memory that in 1884 he had stood by in silence while a brave man was being deserted and a population dependent for help on the government of this country was handed over to the mercies of barbarism. So when he finally came to the point of writing the letter to Mr. Gladstone about the Iron Duke,[1] he could think of no other signature open to him than "Your fellow-criminal in the eyes of God," and forbore.

But although the passionate indignation and "that chastity of honour which felt a stain like a wound" were highly characteristic of Stevenson, at the most they could have led to nothing more than a series of letters to the papers. They might have stirred the public conscience, but though Stevenson would have been dealing with matters less remote from the knowledge of his readers, yet his part in any agitation or protest would not have differed greatly from his efforts in the cause of Samoa. The other project, on the contrary, would, if he had been able to carry it out, have led to a definite and entire change of the whole course of his life. On November 13th, 1885, Mr. John Curtin had

[1] See vol. ii. p. 7.

been murdered by a party of moonlighters in his house, Castle Farm, at Castle Island, County Kerry. His grown-up sons and daughters had shown the greatest courage, and one of the murderers had been shot. For this the family were cut off as far as possible from all the necessaries of life, and in April, 1887, the boycott still continued. Stevenson, while admitting the wrongs of Ireland, had always the most profound regard for the paramount claims of the law, and had long been shocked both by the disregard of it in Ireland and by the callous indifference of the English to the needs of those engaged in its support. He now pitched upon the case of the Curtin family as a concrete instance in which it behoved England to do her duty, and since no one else was forthcoming for the task, he prepared to offer himself as an agent, and, if need were, a martyr in the cause. As a man of letters he was not tied down to any one place to do his work, so he proposed to take the Curtins' farm and there live with his wife and his stepson. His wife added her protests to those of all his friends who heard of the project, but in vain, and so without sharing his illusions she cheerfully prepared to accompany him.

It is impossible to conceive a more quixotic design. Many of the objections to it Stevenson realised himself, or was told by his friends.[1] But perhaps he never suspected how little he understood the Irish, or how utterly futile his action would have proved. As a matter of fact he hardly ever came into contact with Irishmen at any time during his life, was probably misled by false inferences from the Highlanders as to Celtic peculiari-

[1] *Letters*, ii. 27. This letter belongs, however, to 1887.

ties, and in the principal Irishman whom he drew—Colonel Burke in *The Master of Ballantrae*—he has not carried conviction.[1] But these considerations, even if they had been brought home to him, would equally have failed to move him, and it was nothing but his father's illness which kept him for the time in this country. He abandoned the design with reluctance, and, as Mr. Colvin says, "to the last he was never well satisfied that he had done right in giving way."

It was driven from his mind, however, by events which touched him more nearly. In the autumn his parents had taken a house in Bournemouth for the winter, that Mr. Stevenson might have the companionship of his son. For some time after they came Louis was laid up in London, and even when he returned he was too ill to see much of his father or to have any cheering influence upon him. In February Thomas Stevenson was taken by his wife to Torquay, but came back to Bournemouth on the 1st of April. By the 21st he was so ill that it was thought better to bring him home, and he returned to Edinburgh. The accounts of him grew so alarming that Louis followed on the 6th of May, but was too late for his coming to be of any use, and on the 8th all was over.

Of the son's affection and of his appreciation for his father enough has been said to show how great the sense of his loss must have been. The shock of having found his father no longer able to recognise him preyed upon his mind, and for some time to come he was haunted day and night with "ugly images of sickness,

[1] Mac, the Ulsterman in *The Wrecker*, is better, but would not have helped his creator much in Kerry.

decline, and impaired reason," which increased yet further his sadness and the physical depression that weighed him down.

In the meantime he took cold, was not allowed to attend the funeral, and never left the house until, at the end of May, he was able to return to Bournemouth, and quitted Scotland for the last time.

CHAPTER XII

THE UNITED STATES — 1887–88

"But, indeed, I think we all belong to many countries. I am a Scotchman, touch me and you will find the thistle; I am a Briton, and live and move and have my being in the greatness of our national achievements; but am I to forget the long hospitality of that beautiful and kind country, France? Or has not America done me favours to confound my gratitude? Nay, they are all my relatives; I love them all dearly; and should they fall out among themselves (which God in his mercy forbid!), I believe I should be driven mad with their conflicting claims upon my heart." — R. L. S., MS. of *The Silverado Squatters*.

THE chief link which bound Stevenson to this country was now broken, for his mother was free to follow him and his wife to whatever climate the advice of the doctors might send him. Year after year the struggle with ill-health was becoming more painful; "an enemy who was exciting at first, but has now, by the iteration of his strokes, become merely annoying and inexpressibly irksome." He seemed condemned to a life in the sick-room, and even there to be steadily losing ground. Under the altered circumstances, his uncle, Dr. George Balfour, peremptorily insisted on a complete change of climate for a year, suggesting a trial of either one of the Indian hill-stations or Colorado; this advice was reinforced by his Bournemouth physician, Dr. Scott, and for several obvious reasons America was preferred. As soon as his mother's promise to accompany the party was obtained, Skerryvore was let, and by the middle of July their tickets were taken for New York.

Early in the same month he had written to his mother: ". . . I can let you have a cheque for £100 to-morrow, which is certainly a pleasant thing to be able to say. I wish it had happened while my father was still here; I should have liked to help him once — perhaps even from a mean reason: that he might see I had not been wrong in taking to letters. But all this, I daresay, he observes, or, in some other way, feels. And he, at least, is out of his warfare, as I could sometimes wish I were out of mine. The mind of the survivor is mean; it sees the loss, it does not always feel the deliverance. Yet about our loss, I feel it more than I can say — every day more—that it is a happy thing that he is now at peace."

But the invalid was not to escape from England without another illness; worn as he was by his recent experiences, he once more broke down, and was laid up again with hemorrhage.

On the 20th August, however, he left Bournemouth for London, and spent Sunday in the city, at Armfield's Hotel. Here those of his closest friends who at that season were within reach came to bid him farewell, a last good-bye as it proved for all, since he never saw any one of them again. "In one way or another," he had written, "life forces men apart and breaks up the goodly fellowships for ever," and he himself was now to become "no more than a name, a reminiscence, and an occasional crossed letter very laborious to read." [1]

As Mr. Colvin had been the first to welcome him on his return from America, so he was the last to take leave of him the next day, when the party of five — for

[1] *Virginibus Puerisque*, chap. i.

Valentine Roch accompanied them — embarked on the steamship *Ludgate Hill.*

The beginning of their voyage was an unpleasant surprise, for their passages had been taken in ignorance that the ship was used as a cattle-boat, and it was only when the family came on board that they learned that they were going to put in at Havre for their cargo before sailing for America. But Stevenson, ill as he was, did not allow mere discomfort to affect him. His mother's diary contains an entry highly characteristic both of herself and of her son: "We discover that it is a cattle-ship, and that we are going to Havre to take in horses. We agree to look upon it as an adventure and make the best of it. . . . It is very amusing and like a circus to see the horses come on board." Not only was there a shipload of horses, but the vessel resembled the fleet of Ophir at least in this, that she carried a consignment of apes; of which "the big monkey, Jačko, scoured about the ship," and took a special fancy to Stevenson. The other passengers were not unentertaining, and the voyage itself was to him a pure delight, until they came to the Banks of Newfoundland, where he again caught cold. "I was so happy on board that ship," he wrote to his cousin Bob; "I could not have believed it possible. We had the beastliest weather, and many discomforts; but the mere fact of its being a tramp-ship gave us many comforts; we could cut about with the men and officers, stay in the wheel-house, discuss all manner of things, and really be a little at sea. And truly there is nothing else. I had literally forgotten what happiness was, and the full mind — full of external and physical things, not full of

cares and labours and rot about a fellow's behaviour. My heart literally sang; I truly care for nothing so much as for that." [1]

By this time his reputation had crossed the Atlantic, and, chiefly by means of *Jekyll and Hyde*, had spread there to an extent which he had probably not yet realised. The first indication reached him, however, before he had sighted the coast-line of the States, for, on September 6th, when the pilot came on board, it turned out that he was known on his boat as Hyde, while his better-tempered partner was called Jekyll.

The next day the *Ludgate Hill* arrived at New York, where Stevenson was met by a crowd of reporters, and — what was more to his taste — by his old friend, Mr. Will H. Low. He was forthwith carried off to an hotel where Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fairchild had made all arrangements for his reception, and the next day he proceeded to their house at Newport. But on the journey he caught fresh cold, and spent a fortnight there chiefly in bed.

On his return to New York he saw a few people, mostly old friends like Mr. Low and his wife, and first made the personal acquaintance of Mr. Charles Scribner and Mr. Burlingame. Mr. St. Gaudens, the eminent American sculptor, now began to make the necessary studies for the large medallion, which was not completed until five years later. It is the most satisfactory of all the portraits of Stevenson, and has been reproduced with one or two slight modifications for the memorial in St. Giles' Cathedral. The artist was a great admirer of Stevenson's writings, and had said that if he

[1] *Letters*, ii. 67.

ever had the chance he would gladly go a thousand miles for the sake of a sitting. The opportunity came to his doors, and he made a sketch of the head and one hand, though it was not until the following spring that he was able to complete his drawings.

At this time the popularity of Stevenson's work in America was attested also by its appearance on the stage; not only were there two dramatised versions of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* upon the boards, but *Deacon Brodie* was shortly afterwards produced in Philadelphia by an English company.

For the dramatisation of his story Stevenson was of course in no way responsible, but the publicity and the advertisement of his name had naturally the effect of enabling publishers to offer better terms for his work. He had already contributed to American magazines for several years, in the first instance to the *Century*, and then to the new periodical of Messrs. Scribner, for which he now undertook to write a series of twelve articles during the ensuing year. For this he was to receive £700, and this bargain was followed shortly afterwards by an offer of £1600 from another firm for the American serial rights of his next story. The first proposal of all, from the *New York World*, was £2000 for an article every week for a year; but this he had refused. In February, 1883, he had written to his mother: "My six books (since 1878) have brought me in upwards of £600, about £400 of which came from magazines." So great was the change in four years. It must be remembered that in England also he had now reached the turning-point of his fortunes; and early in the following year he became a member of the Athenæum

Club in London under the rule permitting the committee to elect nine persons annually "as being of distinguished eminence in Science, Literature or the Arts, or for Public Services." In this very year it had been found worth while to collect and republish with additions such of his stories, essays, and verse as had hitherto appeared only in magazines. But though the change was not solely due to the greater enterprise of American publishers, it is none the less striking.

His first need, however, for the present was to select a climate where he could best pass the winter. He had come to America in search of health, but the information he received in New York dissuaded him from Colorado Springs, which, situated as it is nearly six thousand feet above the sea, would have deprived him of the company of his wife, to whom such high altitudes were no longer possible. He turned instead to a place at a lower elevation in the Adirondack Mountains, close to the Canadian border, where a sanatorium for consumptive patients had recently been established near the shores of Saranac lake.

Thither went accordingly Mrs. Louis Stevenson and her son, and there they succeeded in finding a house which would serve as winter-quarters for the family. Stevenson arrived with his mother on October 3rd, and here he remained until the middle of the following April. It was no very pleasant spot, at all events in the winter months, and formed a curious contrast to his experience in the tropics. The climate comprised every variety of unpleasantness: it rained, it snowed, it sleeted, it blew, it was thick fog; it froze — the cold was Arctic; it thawed — the discomfort was worse; and it

combined these different phases in every possible way. Two things only could be advanced in its favour, the first and vital fact that Stevenson's health did not suffer, but actually improved; and secondly, it served at times to remind him of Scotland — a Scotland "without peat and without heather"— but that is no very hard task with the true Scot, as may be seen with Stevenson himself in the Pacific.

The place was still somewhat undeveloped; the railway was opened to Saranac itself only during the course of the winter. It was nevertheless so far accessible that visitors not unfrequently found their way there to make Stevenson's acquaintance, and occasionally even stayed a few days, though there was in the house but one spare attic of limited capacity. In Dr. Trudeau, the physician, Stevenson found an agreeable companion, and he also enjoyed the society of some of the resident patients, though he went but little beyond the limits of his own family. They occupied a house belonging to a guide, a frame-house of the usual kind with a verandah; here, with the services of Valentine and a cook, and a boy to chop wood and draw water, they made themselves as comfortable as possible during the winter.

The younger Mrs. Stevenson began the campaign by a hasty visit to Canada to lay in a supply of furs for the family, and her foresight was well rewarded. In December the cold began, and by January the thermometer was sometimes nearly 30 degrees below zero. There was a stove in each chamber, and an open fireplace for logs in the central living-room, but these were of little avail. "Fires do not radiate," wrote Stevenson; "you burn your hands all the time on what seem to be

cold stones." His mother gives an illustration: "Cold venison was crunching with ice after being an hour in the oven, and I saw a large lump of ice still unmelted in a pot where water was steaming all round it."

Stevenson himself stood the cold better than any of his family, and, arrayed in a buffalo coat, astrakhan cap, and Indian boots, used to go out daily. He would take short walks on a hill behind the house, and skated on the lake when the ice could be kept clear. But both the ladies were ordered away for their health at different times, while in February the maid was laid up with a severe attack of influenza, the next victim being Stevenson himself.

In the meantime he had not been idle. By December he had written four of the essays for the magazine, and was already on the threshold of a new Scotch story.

"I was walking one night in the verandah of a small house in which I lived, outside the hamlet of Saranac. It was winter; the night was very dark; the air extraordinary clear and cold, and sweet with the purity of forests. From a good way below, the river was to be heard contending with ice and boulders: a few lights appeared, scattered unevenly among the darkness, but so far away as not to lessen the sense of isolation. For the making of a story here were fine conditions. I was besides moved with the spirit of emulation, for I had just finished my third or fourth perusal of *The Phantom Ship*. 'Come,' said I to my engine, 'let us make a tale, a story of many years and countries, of the sea and the land, savagery and civilisation; a story that shall have the same large features, and may be treated in the same summary elliptic method as the book you

have been reading and admiring.' . . . There cropped up in my memory a singular case of a buried and resuscitated fakir, which I had often been told by an uncle of mine, then lately dead, Inspector-General John Balfour. On such a fine frosty night, with no wind and the thermometer below zero, the brain works with much vivacity; and the next moment I had seen the circumstance transplanted from India and the tropics to the Adirondack wilderness and the stringent cold of the Canadian border. . . . If the idea was to be of any use at all for me, I had to create a kind of evil genius to his friends and family, take him through many disappearances, and make this final restoration from the pit of death, in the icy American wilderness, the last and grimmest of the series. I need not tell my brothers of the craft that I was now in the most interesting moment of an author's life; the hours that followed that night upon the balcony, and the following nights and days, whether walking abroad or lying wakeful in my bed, were hours of unadulterated joy. My mother, who was then living with me alone, perhaps had less enjoyment; for, in the absence of my wife, who is my usual helper in these times of parturition, I must spur her up at all seasons to hear me relate and try to clarify my unformed fancies.

"And while I was groping for the fable and the character required, behold I found them lying ready and nine years old in my memory. . . . Here, thinking of quite other things, I had stumbled on the solution, or perhaps I should rather say (in stagewright phrase) the Curtain or final Tableau of a story conceived long before on the moors between Pitlochry and Strathairdle, con-

ceived in Highland rain, in the blend of the smell of heather and bog-plants, and with a mind full of the Athole correspondence and the Memoirs of the Chevalier de Johnstone. So long ago, so far away it was, that I had first evoked the faces and the mutual tragic situation of the men of Durrisdeer." [1]

The accessibility of his winter-quarters had its advantages, but was not without its dangers for Stevenson, now that publishers recognised him as a writer for whose works they must contend in advance. Acute and capable as he was when confronted with any piece of business, the moment it was done he dismissed it from his mind, and allowed its details, if not its very existence, to fade from his memory. Having promised Messrs. Scribner the control of all his work which might appear in America, he shortly afterwards, in sheer forgetfulness, sold the serial rights of his next story to Mr. M'Clure. Nobody could have been more sincerely or more deeply distressed over the matter than Stevenson himself, and, fortunately for his peace of mind, nobody seems ever for one instant to have thought him capable of any act of bad faith. But it must have been as much of a relief to every one concerned, as it was very greatly to his own advantage, when shortly afterwards he handed over the disposal of his writings to the management of his old and trusted friend, Mr. Charles Baxter.

At Saranac Mr. Osbourne wrote entirely on his own account a story called at first *The Finsbury Tontine* and afterwards *The Game of Biuff*, which, after the lapse of many months and a course of collaboration with his stepfather, was to appear as *The Wrong Box*. At first

[1] " Genesis of ' The Master of Ballantrae,' " *Juvenilia*, p. 297.

this was an independent book, but as soon as the idea of collaboration had occurred to them, several projects were speedily set on foot, since the joint books would have this advantage, that, Mr. Osbourne being an American citizen, they could be copyrighted in the United States. The *New York Ledger* is a paper which had long a reputation for sensational stories of the fine old melodramatic kind, and as the editor was willing to give Stevenson a commission, it seemed to him highly entertaining to try his hand at this style of narrative. A plot was drawn out, and then: "Study of the *Ledger* convinced me that 'Fighting the Ring' would not do. Accordingly, at about nine one night Lloyd and I began, and next day before lunch we had finished the design of a new and more sensational tale, 'The Gaol Bird.' 'T is the correct *Ledger* subject of a noble criminal, who returns to prove his innocence; but it seems picturesquely designed, and we flatter ourselves that the relations between the criminal and the man whom he suspects (Donald, first Baron Drummond of Drummond and Raracaroo, late Governor-General of India) are essentially original, and should quite blind all but the most experienced."

Mr. Osbourne laboured at this tale by himself for many a long day in vain; but the plot was hardly sketched before the collaborators were again deep in the plan of a new novel dealing with the Indian Mutiny — "a tragic romance of the most tragic sort. . . . The whole last part is — well, the difficulty is that, short of resuscitating Shakespeare, I don't know who is to write it."

Of their methods Mr. Osbourne writes: "When an idea for a book was started, we used to talk it over

together, and generally carried the tale on from one invention to another, until, in accordance with Louis' own practice, we had drawn out a complete list of the chapters. In all our collaborations I always wrote the first draft, to break the ground, and it is a pleasure to me to recall how pleased Louis was, for instance, with the first three chapters of *The Ebb Tide*. As a rule, he was a man chary of praise, but he fairly overflowed toward those early chapters, and I shall never forget the elation his praise gave me. The draft was then written and rewritten by Louis and myself in turn, and was worked over and over again by each of us as often as was necessary. For instance, the chapter in *The Wrecker* at Honolulu, where Dodd goes out to the lighthouse, must have been written and rewritten eleven times. Naturally it came about that it was the bad chapters that took the most rewriting. After this, how could anybody but Louis or myself pretend to know which of us wrote any given passage? The Paris parts of *The Wrecker* and the end of *The Ebb Tide* (as it stands) I never even touched.[1] The collaboration was, of course, a mistake for me, nearly as much as for him; but I don't believe Louis ever enjoyed any work more. He liked the comradeship — my work coming in just as his energy flagged, or *vice versa;* and he liked my applause when he — as he always did — pulled us magnificently out of sloughs. In a way, I was well fitted to help him. I had a knack for dialogue — I mean, of the note-taking kind. I was a kodaker: he an artist and a man of genius. I managed the petty makeshifts and inventions which were constantly necessary; I

1 Cf. *Letters*, ii. 357.

was the practical man, so to speak, the one who paced the distances, and used the weights and measures; in *The Wrecker*, the storm was mine; so were the fight and the murders on the *Currency Lass;* the picnics in San Francisco, and the commercial details of Loudon's partnership. Nares was mine and Pinkerton to a great degree, and Captain Brown was mine throughout. But although the first four chapters of *The Ebb Tide* remain, save for the text of Herrick's letter to his sweetheart, almost as I first wrote them, yet *The Wrong Box* was more mine as a whole than either of the others. It was written and then rewritten before there was any thought of collaboration, and was actually finished and ready for the press. There was, in consequence, far less give and take between us in this book than in the others. Louis had to follow the text very closely, being unable to break away without jeopardising the succeeding chapters. He breathed into it, of course, his own incomparable power, humour, and vivacity, and forced the thing to live as it had never lived before; but, even in his transforming hands, it still retains (it seems to me) a sense of failure; and this verdict has so far been sustained by the public's reluctance to buy the book. *The Wrecker*, on the other hand, has always been in excellent demand, rivalling *Kidnapped, The Master of Ballantrae,* and *Catriona,* and still continues to earn £200 a year with unvarying regularity."

At Saranac Stevenson carried on his music under disadvantages, and his chief solace lay in the pleasures of adaptation. "All my spare time," he wrote, "is spent in trying to set words to music. My last attempt is the

divine theme of Beethoven's six *variations faciles.* —— will know it; and if she does not like it — well, she knows nothing of music, or sorrow, or consolation, or religion. . . . That air has done me more good than all the churches of Christendom."

Meanwhile, as an interpreter, he fell from the pianoforte to the more portable penny whistle. "'T is true my whistle explodes with sharp noises, and has to be patched with court-plaster like a broken nose; but its notes are beginning to seem pretty sweet to the player — *The Penny Piper.*"

But already, in the heart of the mountains, he had been laying plans of travel, which were to lead him far and wide across the seas and to end in a continued exile of which at this time he had never dreamed. He had always nourished a passion for the sea, whether in romance or in real life; it ran in his blood, and came to him from both his father and his grandfather.[1] As a boy, on Saturday afternoons, he would make a party to go down to Leith to see the ships, for in those days, as always, he loved a ship "as a man loves Burgundy or daybreak." The sea was to him the redeeming feature of engineering, and a year or two after he had given up the profession he wrote with eager anticipation of a projected trip in the *Pharos*, the lighthouse steamer. Then for ten years he hardly mentioned the sea again, and even in crossing the Atlantic as an amateur emigrant, he seems to have taken more interest in his fellow-passengers than in the ocean. But his feelings were unchanged: in 1883 his idea of a fortune is to "end

[1] "It was that old gentleman's blood that brought me to Samoa." —*Letters*, ii. 258.

with horses and yachts and all the fun of the fair"; and in some verses written at Hyères, contrasting his wife's aspirations with his own, he declares —

> "She vows in ardour for a horse to trot,
> I stake my votive prayers upon a yacht."

We have seen how he enjoyed his voyage across the Atlantic; and to this pleasure he was perpetually recurring: "I have been made a lot of here, . . . but I could give it all up, and agree that —— was the author of my works, for a good seventy-ton schooner and the coins to keep her on. And to think there are parties with yachts who would make the exchange! I know a little about fame now; it is no good compared to a yacht; and anyway there is more fame in a yacht, more genuine fame."[1] And no doubt his envy had been excited at Newport by hearing of Mr. Osbourne's experiences in learning to sail a cat-boat.[2]

It was therefore no unexpected development, no outbreak of any new taste, when it became a favourite diversion of the winter nights at Saranac to plan a yachting cruise. So far indeed were the discussions carried, that the place for the piano in the saloon and the number and disposition of the small-arms were already definitely settled. At first, in spite of the severity of the climate and the proverbial roughness of the weather, they had looked chiefly to the Atlantic seaboard, but in the end of March, when Mrs. Stevenson left Saranac for California on a visit to her people, she

[1] *Letters*, ii. 68.

[2] A rather broad and shallow boat, round-bottomed, with a centre board, and a single mast stepped at the extreme point of the bow.

was instructed to report if she could find any craft suitable for their purpose at San Francisco.

At last, by the middle of April, Stevenson was free to return to the cities if he chose. He made a heroic effort to deal with the arrears of his correspondence: "In three of my last days I sent away upwards of seventy letters"; and then turning his steps to New York, he there spent about a fortnight. The time to which he recurred with the greatest pleasure was an afternoon he spent on a seat in Washington Square enjoying the company and conversation of "Mark Twain." But of the city he soon wearied; in the beginning of May he crossed the Hudson, and went to an hotel near the mouth of the Manasquan, a river in New Jersey, where with his mother and stepson he spent nearly a month. The place had been recommended to him by Mr. Low, who was able to spend some time there, and who says: "Though it was early spring and the weather was far from good, Louis (pretending that, in comparison with Scotland at least, it was fine spring weather) was unusually well, and we had many a pleasant sail on the river and some rather long walks. Louis was much interested in the 'catboat,' and, with the aid of various works on sailing-vessels, tried to master the art of sailing it with some success.

"He was here at Manasquan when a telegram arrived from his wife, who had been in San Francisco for a few weeks, announcing that the yacht *Casco* might be hired for a trip among the islands of the South Seas. I was there at the time, and Louis made that decision to go which exiled him from his dearest friends — though he

little suspected at the time — while the messenger waited."

The decision taken, Stevenson returned to New York on the 28th, and by the 7th of June he had reached California. Who that has read his description of crossing the mountains on his first journey to the West but remembers the phrase — "It was like meeting one's wife!"? And this time his wife herself was at Sacramento to meet him.

It was a busy time. The *Casco* was the first question — a topsail schooner, ninety-five feet in length, of seventy tons burden, built for racing in Californian waters, though she had once been taken as far as Tahiti. She had most graceful lines, and with her lofty masts, white sails and decks, and glittering brasswork, was a lovely craft to the eye, as she sat like a bird upon the water. Her saloon was fitted most luxuriously with silk and velvet of gaudy colours, for no money had been spared in her construction; nevertheless her cockpit was none too safe, her one pump was inadequate in size and almost worthless; the sail-plan forward was meant for racing and not for cruising, and even if the masts were still in good condition, they were quite unfitted for hurricane weather.

Nevertheless the vessel was chartered and all preparations were put in hand. The owner, Dr. Merritt, an eccentric Californian millionaire, was at first most backward about the whole affair, and, without having seen him, displayed the greatest distrust of Stevenson. The latter was very unwell, and getting rapidly worse, for San Francisco disagreed with him. Matters hung fire, but at last his wife discovered that Dr. Merritt

wanted to meet him. An interview took place and all difficulties vanished. "I 'll go ahead now with the yacht," said the doctor: "I 'd read things in the papers about Stevenson, and thought he was a kind of crank; but he 's a plain, sensible man that knows what he 's talking about just as well as I do."

If any fears had existed in his mind about the solvency of his lessee they were unfounded. Under the terms of his father's marriage settlement Stevenson had six months before received a sum of £3000, and it was in the first instance upon the strength of this that he planned the voyage. As he wrote to Mr. Baxter, "If this business fails to set me up, well, £2000 is gone, and I know I can't get better." On the other hand, if it restored his health, he had received a most liberal offer from Messrs. M'Clure for a series of letters describing his experiences in the Pacific.

Along with the yacht, at the owner's request, they gladly engaged his skipper, Captain Otis, who knew the *Casco* well, and the cook, a Chinaman, who passed himself off as a Japanese. The former choice they had no reason to regret, for the captain showed himself a bold and skilful seaman, who, beginning the voyage with a supreme contempt for his new employers, ended it as an intimate and valued friend, whose portrait for the rest may be found in the pages of *The Wrecker*. A crew of four deck-hands, "three Swedes and the inevitable Finn," was engaged by the captain, and four "sea-lawyers" they proved to be; a reporter, trying to ship himself as a hand, was ejected, and a passage was with great difficulty refused to a Seventh-Day Adventist, who afterwards with a crew of his

CHAPTER XIII

SOUTH SEA CRUISES — THE EASTERN PACIFIC, JUNE, 1888—JUNE, 1889

"This climate; these voyagings; these landfalls at dawn; new islands peeking from the morning bank; new forested harbours; new passing alarms of squalls and surf; new interests of gentle natives — the whole tale of my life is better to me than any poem."

Letters, ii. 160.

For nearly three years to come Stevenson wandered up and down the face of the Pacific, spending most of his time in the Hawaiian Islands and the Gilberts, in Tahiti, and in Samoa, his future home; during this period he visited, however cursorily, almost every group of importance in the Eastern and Central Pacific.

The delight these experiences kindled for him can never be expressed, since, apart from one or two phrases in his letters, he has failed to convey any image of it himself. It is hardly too much to say that nobody else in the world would have derived such keen or such varied enjoyment from cruising through these islands, so wild, so beautiful — among their inhabitants so attractive, so remote from experience — in these waters, so fascinating and so dangerous. The very romance that hangs about the South Seas is fatal to any attempt to sustain, among the mazes of detail and necessary explanation, the charm suggested by their name. Stevenson himself set out to write an account of his wanderings and adventures among the islands it had

for years been the dream of his life to see, but as soon as he essayed the task, he was overwhelmed with a mass of legend and history and anthropology. It is hard for people at their own firesides to realise the differences between the islands visited in one cruise in the same ocean. Perhaps some vague and general conception of the diversity of Stevenson's experiences might be formed by imagining a rapid visit to the islands of Sardinia, Sicily, Majorca, and Tenerife, a fresh departure for Jersey and the Iles d'Or, ending with a passing glimpse at the West Indies.

The point now to be considered is not, however, the customs and character of the natives whom Stevenson encountered, but rather how he was affected and influenced by what he saw, the characteristics which were called out in him during the course of his travel, and the impressions which he himself produced. His chapters *In the South Seas* have now been collected and published, and from them I shall only quote one or two of the most striking passages, relying rather on his original rough journal at the time, which naturally strikes a more personal note and deals to a greater extent with his individual experience.

The first point, as we have seen, was the Marquesas, a group of high[1] islands of extreme beauty, occupied by the French and but seldom visited by travellers,

[1] Islands in the Pacific are usually divided into "high" and "low"; the former being, generally speaking, islands of volcanic origin, often rising several thousand feet above the sea, densely wooded and beautiful in the extreme. These frequently have a barrier reef of coral, protecting what would otherwise be an ironbound coast, but their main structure is igneous rock. "Low" islands are atolls or mere

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remote from any other group and out of the track of ships and steamers. For these the *Casco* now steered a course of three thousand miles across the open sea. Fortunately the main object of the cruise seemed likely to be gained without delay; the warmer climate and the sea air suited Stevenson at once, and he grew stronger day by day. The voyage was pleasant but without event other than the passing squalls, and is thus recorded in his diary: —

"Since on the fifth day we were left ignominiously behind by a full-rigged English ship, our quondam comrade, bound round the Horn, we have not spied a sail, nor a land bird, nor a shred of seaweed. In impudent isolation, the toy-schooner has ploughed her path of snow across the empty deep, far from all track of commerce, far from any hand of help: now to the sound of slatting sails and stamping sheet-blocks, staggering in the turmoil of that business falsely called a calm, now, in the assault of squalls, burying her lee-rail in the sea. To the limit of the north-east trades we carried some attendant pilot birds, silent, brown-suited, quakerish fellows, infinitely graceful on the wing; dropping at times in comfortable sheltered hollows of the swell; running awhile in the snowy footmarks on the water before they rise again in flight. Scarce had these dropped us, ere the Boatswains took their place, birds of an ungainly shape, but beautiful against the heavens in their white plumage. Late upon a starry

banks built by the coral insect, never more than twenty feet above water, and owing any beauty they possess to the sea, the sun, and the palm-tree. The Marquesas, Tahiti, Samoa, and the Hawaiian group are high islands; the Paumotus, the Gilberts, and the Marshalls are low.

night, as they fly invisible overhead, the strange voices of these co-voyagers fall about us strangely. Flying-fish, a skimming silver rain on the blue sea; a turtle fast asleep in the early morning sunshine; the Southern Cross hung thwart in the fore-rigging like the frame of a wrecked kite—the pole star and the familiar Plough dropping ever lower in the wake: these build up thus far the history of our voyage. It is singular to come so far and to see so infinitely little."

"*July 19th.*—The morning was hot, the wind steady, the sky filled with such clouds as, on a pleasant English day, might promise a cool rain. One of these had been visible for some time, a continental isle of sun and shadow, moving innocuously on the skyline far to windward; when upon a sudden this harmless-looking monster, seeming to smell a quarry, paused, hung awhile as if in stays, and breaking off five points,[1] fell like an armed man upon the *Casco*. Next moment, the inhabitants of the cabin were piled one upon another, the sea was pouring into the cockpit and spouting in fountains through forgotten deadlights, and the steersman stood spinning the wheel for his life in a halo of tropical rain.

"I chronicle this squall, first, for the singularity and apparent malignancy of its behaviour, as though it had been sent express to cruise after the *Casco;* and, second, because of the nonsense people write upon the climate of these seas. Every day for a week or so, in defiance of authorities, we have had from three to four squalls; and as for this last, no one who saw it desires to see a worse. Sailing a ship, even in these so-called fine-

[1] *I.e.* of the points of the compass, sixty-four in number.

weather latitudes, may be compared to walking the tight-rope; so constant is the care required. On our heavenly nights, when we sit late on deck, the trade-wind still chariots overhead an endless company of attenuated clouds. These shine in the moonlight faintly bright, affect strange and semi-human forms like the more battered of the antique statues, blot out the smaller stars, and are themselves pierced by the radiance of the greater. 'Is there any wind in them?' so goes the regular sea question. A capful at least, and even in the least substantial; but for the most part in these latitudes they fly far above man's concerns, perhaps out of all reach, so that not even the lowest fringe of wind shall breathe upon the mainmasthead."

After two-and-twenty days at sea they made their landfall. "The first experience can never be repeated. The first love, the first sunrise, the first South Sea island, are memories apart and touched a virginity of sense. On the 28th of July, 1888, the moon was an hour down by four in the morning, . . . and it was half-past five before we could distinguish our expected islands from the clouds on the horizon. The interval was passed on deck in the silence of expectation, the customary thrill of landfall heightened by the strangeness of the shores that we were then approaching. Slowly they took shape in the attenuating darkness. Uahuna, piling up to a truncated summit, appeared the first upon the starboard bow; almost abeam arose our destination, Nukahiva, whelmed in cloud; and betwixt, and to the southward, the first rays of the sun displayed the needles of Uapu. These pricked about the line of the horizon, like the pinnacles of some ornate and mon-

strous church; they stood there, in the sparkling brightness of the morning, the fit signboard of a world of wonders. . . . The land heaved up in peaks and rising vales; it fell in cliffs and buttresses; its colour ran through fifty modulations in a scale of pearl and rose and olive; and it was crowned above by opalescent clouds. The suffusion of vague hues deceived the eye; the shadows of clouds were confounded with the articulations of the mountain; and the isle and its unsubstantial canopy rose and shimmered before us like a single mass. There was no beacon, no smoke of towns to be expected, no plying pilot. . . .

"We bore away along the shore. On our port-beam we might hear the explosions of the surf; a few birds flew fishing under the prow; there was no other sound or mark of life, whether of man or beast, in all that quarter of the island. Winged by her own impetus and the dying breeze, the *Casco* skimmed under cliffs, opened out a cove, showed us a beach and some green trees, and flitted by again, bowing to the swell. . . . Again the cliff yawned, but now with a deeper entry; and the *Casco,* hauling her wind, began to slide into the bay of Anaho. Rude and bare hills embraced the inlet upon either hand; it was enclosed to the landward by a bulk of shattered mountains. In every crevice of that barrier the forest harboured, roosting and nesting there like birds about a ruin; and far above, it greened and roughened the razor edges of the summit.

"Under the eastern shore, our schooner, now bereft of any breeze, continued to creep in; the smart creature, when once under way, appearing motive in herself. From close aboard arose the bleating of young

lambs; a bird sang in the hillside; the scent of the land and of a hundred fruits or flowers flowed forth to meet us; and, presently, a house or two appeared. . . . The mark of anchorage was a blow-hole in the rocks, near the south-easterly corner of the bay. Punctually to our use, the blow-hole spouted; the schooner turned upon her heel; the anchor plunged. It was a small sound, a great event; my soul went down with these moorings whence no windlass may extract nor any diver fish it up; and I, and some part of my ship's company, were from that hour the bond-slaves of the isles of Vivien." [1]

This was Nukahiva, the island of Herman Melville's *Typee*, and here for three weeks they lay in Anaho Bay, where there lived only natives and one white trader. They then sailed round to the south coast of the same island, to Taiohae, the port of entry and the capital of the group.

The two special features of the Marquesas which differentiate them from the other islands which Stevenson saw are, first, that the natives were till very recently the most inveterate cannibals of Polynesia, and second, that their population was melting away like snow off a dyke, so that extinction seemed imminent within the next few years.

Into the details of his visit I have no intention of going — partly they may be read in his own volume *In the South Seas* — but I would draw attention to Stevenson's attitude toward the native races, for though I shall have occasion to return to it again in Samoa, there was but little growth or development of his essential

[1] *In the South Seas*, pp. 2–6.

feelings or principles in dealing with them. Intelligent sympathy was the keynote, and the same kindliness to them as to all men. He never idealised them, and his view was but rarely affected by sentiment. His sense of history, combined with his power of seeing things in a new light and the refusal to accept commonplaces without examination, here stood him in good stead.

Five years before, in the Riviera, he had written:[1] "There is no form of conceit more common or more silly than to look down on barbarous codes of morals. Barbarous virtues, the chivalrous point of honour, the fidelity of the wild Highlander or the two-sworded Japanese, are of a generous example. We may question the utility of what is done; the whole-hearted sincerity of the actors shuts our mouth. Nor can that idea be merely dishonourable for which men relinquish the comforts and consideration of society, the love of wife and child and parent, the light of the sun, and the protection of the laws. The seductions of life are strong in every age and station; we make idols of our affections, idols of our customary virtues; we are content to avoid the inconvenient wrong and to forego the inconvenient right with almost equal self-approval, until at last we make a home for our conscience among the negative virtues and the cowardly vices."

This was of the Japanese in their recent feudal period: here is one of his earliest notes in the Marquesas, after meeting the natives face to face:—

"*August 3rd.— Tropical Night Thoughts.* I awoke this morning about three; the night was heavenly in

[1] *Magazine of Art*, November, 1883, *à propos* of the story of the "Forty-seven Ronins."

scent and temperature; the long swell brimmed into the bay and seemed to fill it full and then subside; silently, gently, and deeply the *Casco* rolled; only at times a block piped like a bird. I sat and looked seaward toward the mouth of the bay at the headlands and the stars; at the constellation of diamonds, each infinitesimally small, each individual and of equal lustre, and all shining together in heaven like some old-fashioned clasp; at the planet with the visible moon, as though he were beginning to re-people heaven by the process of gemination; at many other lone lamps and marshalled clusters. And upon a sudden it ran into my mind, even with shame, that these were lovelier than our nights in the north, the planets softer and brighter, and the constellations more handsomely arranged. I felt shame, I say, as at an ultimate infidelity: that I should desert the stars that shone upon my father; and turning to the shore-side, where there were some high squalls overhead, and the mountains loomed up black, I could have fancied I had slipped ten thousand miles away and was anchored in a Highland loch; that when day came and made clear the superimpending slopes, it would show pine and the red heather and the green fern, and roofs of turf sending up the smoke of peats, and the alien speech that should next greet my ears should be Gaelic, not Kanaka.[1]

"The singular narrowness of this world's range, and, above all, the paucity of human combinations, are forced alike upon the reader and the traveller. The one rang-

[1] Kanaka, the Hawaiian word for a man, is used by white men throughout the Pacific as equivalent to "native," "Polynesian." In Australia and Fiji it generally means Melanesian = black boy.

ing through books, the other over peopled space, comes with astonishment on the same scenery, the same merry stories, the same fashion, the same stage of social evolution. Under cover of darkness here might be a Hebridean harbour; and if I am to call these men savages (which no bribe would induce me to do), what name should I find for Hebridean man? The Highlands and Islands somewhat more than a century back were in much the same convulsive and transitionary state as the Marquesas to-day. In the one, the cherished habit of tattooing; in the other, a cherished costume, proscribed; in both, the men disarmed, the chiefs dishonoured, new fashions introduced, and chiefly that new pernicious fashion of regarding money as the be-all and end-all of existence; the commercial age, in each case, succeeding at a bound to the age militant: war, with its truces and its courtesies, succeeded by peace, with its meanness and its unending effort: the means of life no longer wrested with a bare face from hereditary enemies, but ground or cheated out of next-door neighbours and old family friends; in each case, a man's luxury cut off, beef driven under cover of night from lowland pastures denied to the meat-loving Highlander, long-pig pirated from the next village to the man-eating Kanaka."

And here is the practical outcome of his experience as a traveller, written in 1890, a passage specially selected for praise by so able and original an investigator as Mary Kingsley:—

"When I desired any detail of savage custom, or of superstitious belief, I cast back in the story of my fathers, and fished for what I wanted with some trait

of equal barbarism: Michael Scott, Lord Derwentwater's head, the second-sight, the Water Kelpie,—each of these I have found to be a killing bait; the black bull's head of Stirling procured me the legend of Rahéro; and what I knew of the Cluny Macphersons, or the Appin Stewarts, enabled me to learn, and helped me to understand, about the *Tevas* of Tahiti. The native was no longer ashamed, his sense of kinship grew warmer, and his lips were opened. It is this sense of kinship that the traveller must rouse and share; or he had better content himself with travels from the blue bed to the brown." [1]

It is interesting to compare his portrait of Vaekehu, the refined and aged queen of the Marquesas spending a devout old age after a stormy youth of cannibalism, with the similar picture in the *Mariage de Loti.* [2]

"Her house is on the European plan: a table in the midst of the chief room; photographs and religious pictures on the wall. It commands to either hand a charming vista: through the front door, a peep of green lawn, scurrying pigs, the pendent fans of the cocopalm, and the splendour of the bursting surf; through the back, mounting forest glades and coronals of precipice. Here, in the strong through-draught, her Majesty received us in a simple gown of print, and with no mark of royalty but the exquisite finish of her tattooed mittens, the elaboration of her manners, and the gentle falsetto in which all the highly refined among Marquesan ladies (and Vaekehu above all others) delight to

[1] *In the South Seas*, p. 14.

[2] *Le Mariage de Loti*, 49th edition, p. 101. Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1893.

sing their language. . . . Vaekehu is very deaf; *merci* is her only word of French; and I do not know that she seemed clever. An exquisite, kind refinement, with a shade of quietism, gathered perhaps from the nuns, was what chiefly struck us. . . . She came with Stanilao (her son) and his little girl to dine on board the *Casco*. She had dressed for the occasion: wore white, which very well became her strong brown face; and sat among us, eating or smoking her cigarette, quite cut off from all society, or only now and then included through the intermediary of her son. It was a position that might have been ridiculous, and she made it ornamental; making believe to hear and to be entertained; her face, whenever she met our eyes, lighted with the smile of good society; her contributions to the talk, when she made any, and that was seldom, always complimentary and pleasing. No attention was paid to the child, for instance, but what she remarked and thanked us for. Her parting with each when she came to leave was gracious and pretty, as had been every step of her behaviour. When Mrs. Stevenson held out her hand to say good-bye, Vaekehu took it, held it, and a moment smiled upon her; dropped it, and then, as upon a kindly afterthought, and with a sort of warmth of condescension, held out both hands and kissed my wife upon both cheeks. Given the same relation of years and rank, the thing would have been so done upon the boards of the Comédie Française; just so might Madame Brohan have warmed and condescended to Madame Broisat in the *Marquis de Villemer*. It was my part to accompany our guests ashore: when I kissed the little girl good-bye at the pier-steps,

Vaekehu gave a cry of gratification, reached down her hand into the boat, took mine, and pressed it with that flattering softness which seems the coquetry of the old lady in every quarter of the earth. The next moment she had taken Stanilao's arm, and they moved off along the pier in the moonlight, leaving me bewildered. This was a queen of cannibals; she was tattooed from hand to foot, and perhaps the greatest masterpiece of that art now extant, so that a while ago, before she was grown prim, her leg was one of the sights of Taiohae; she had been passed from chief to chief; she had been fought for and taken in war; perhaps, being so great a lady, she had sat on the high place, and throned it there, alone of her sex, while the drums were going twenty strong and the priests carried up the blood-stained baskets of long-pig. And now behold her, out of that past of violence and sickening feasts, step forth in her age, a quiet, smooth, elaborate old lady, such as you might find at home (mittened also, but not often so well-mannered) in a score of country-houses. Only Vaekehu's mittens were of dye, not of silk; and they had been paid for, not in money, but the cooked flesh of men. It came in my mind like a clap, what she could think of it herself, and whether at heart, perhaps, she might not regret and aspire after the barbarous and stirring past. But when I asked Stanilao: 'Ah,' said he, 'she is content; she is religious, she passes all her days with the sisters.'" [1]

And here was the farewell of Prince Stanilao, an intelligent and educated gentleman, from whom Stevenson had learned much of the history and condition of

[1] *In the South Seas*, p. 81.

the islands, and with whom he had spent a long afternoon, telling him the story of Gordon, "and many episodes of the Indian Mutiny, Lucknow, the second battle of Cawnpore, the relief of Arrah, the death of poor Spottiswoode and Sir Hugh Rose's hotspur midland campaign." How many white men would have been at the pains to give so much instruction or so much pleasure to a native in a foreign possession? This is the result: "Ah, vous devriez rester ici, mon cher ami. Vous êtes les gens qu'il faut pour les Kanaques; vous êtes doux, vous et votre famille; vous seriez obéis dans toutes les îles."[1]

It was the same at Anaho, the same afterwards in Atuona: he understood the natives; he treated them with understanding, and they liked him. The higher the rank, for the most part, the greater the liking, the more complete the appreciation. Vaekehu and Stanilao were the great folk of the archipelago; Stevenson, to whom snobbishness was unknown, found them also the most estimable.

"This is the rule in Polynesia, with few exceptions; the higher the family, the better the man—better in sense, better in manners, and usually taller and stronger in body. A stranger advances blindfold. He scrapes acquaintance as he can. Save the tattoo in the Marquesas, nothing indicates the difference in rank; and yet almost invariably we found, after we had made them, that our friends were persons of station."

But his attention was by no means limited to natives; the behaviour that he enjoined on missionaries[2] he

[1] *In the South Seas*, pp. 81, 87.

[2] Appendix B, vol. ii. p. 229

exercised freely himself; to white men and half-castes he was equally genial and accessible. The governor and the gendarmes, the priests and the lay-brothers, the traders and the "Beach," all found him kindly and courteous, and the best of company.

The Resident carried him off to show him the prison, but it was empty; the women were gone calling and the men were shooting goats upon the mountains. The gendarmes told him stories of the Franco-German war, and gave him charming French meals. Of the missionaries, the portraits of the great and good Dordillon, the veteran bishop only just dead, and of Frère Michel, the architect, may be found in the South Sea volume; from Stevenson's notes I give the charming picture of Père Siméon:—

"Père Siméon, the small frail figure in the black robe drawing near under the palms; the girlish, kind and somewhat pretty face under the straw hat; the strong rustic Gascon accent; the sudden lively doffing of the hat, at once so French and so ecclesiastical; he was a man you could not look upon without visions of his peasant ancestors, worthy folk, sitting at home to-day in France, and rejoiced (I hope often) with letters from their boy. Down we sat together under the eaves of the house of Taipi-Kikino, and were presently deep in talk. I had feared to meet a missionary, feared to find the narrowness and the self-sufficiency that deface their publications, that too often disgrace their behaviour. There was no fear of it here; Père Siméon admired these natives as I do myself, admired them with spiritual envy; the superior of his congregation had said to him on his departure: 'You are going among a people

more civilised than we—*peut-être plus civilisés que nous-mêmes*': in spite of which warning, having read some books of travel on his voyage, he came to these shores (like myself) expecting to find them peopled with lascivious monkeys. Good Bishop Dordillon had opened his eyes: 'There are nothing but lies in books of travel,' said the bishop.

"What then was Père Siméon doing here? The question rose in my mind, and I could see that he read the thought. Truly they were a people, on the whole, of a mind far liker Christ's than any of the races of Europe; no spiritual life, almost no family life, but a kindness, a generosity, a readiness to give and to forgive, without parallel; to some extent that was the bishop's doing; some of it had been since undone; death runs so busy in their midst, total extinction so instantly impended, that it seemed a hopeless task to combat their vices; as they were, they would go down in the abyss of things past; the watchers were already looking at the clock; Père Siméon's business was the visitation of the sick, to smooth the pillows of this dying family of man."

In contrast to this melancholy vigil were Stevenson's ecstasy of life and the joy with which he entered into gathering shells upon the shore. Charles Kingsley was not happier when landed at last upon the tropical beach he had been longing all his life to see.

"Ashore to the cove and hunted shells, according to my prevision; but the delight of it was a surprise. To stand in the silver margin of the sea, now dry-shod, now buried to the ankle in the thrilling coolness, now higher than the knee; to watch, as the reflux drew

down, wonderful marvels of colour and design fleeting between my feet, to grasp at, to miss, to seize them; and now to find them what they promised, and now to catch only *maya* of coloured sand, pounded fragments, and pebbles, that, as soon as they were dry, became as dull and homely as the flint upon a garden path. I toiled about this childish pleasure in the strong sun for hours, sharply conscious of my incurable ignorance, and yet too much pleased to be ashamed. Presently I came round upon the shelves that line the bottom of the cliff; and there, in a pool where the last of the surf sometimes irrupted, making it bubble like a spring, I found my best, that is, my strangest, shell. It was large, as large as a woman's head, rugged as rock, in colour variegated with green and orange; but alas, the 'poor inhabitant' was at home. On the struggles of conscience that ensued I scorn to dwell; but my curiosity, after several journeys in my hand, returned finally to his rock home, of whose sides he greedily laid hold, and he gained a second term of the pleasures of existence."

On August 22nd the *Casco* left Nukahiva, and arrived the following day at Taahauku in the island of Hiva-oa, a more remote and even more thinly populated island. Here they stayed twelve days, and here Stevenson and his family went through the ceremony of adoption into the family of Paa-aeua, the official chief of Atuona, while Mr. Osbourne "made brothers" also with the deposed hereditary chief, Moipu.

These observances meant anything or nothing, according to the desire of the initiated. I single them out for mention here because (apart from white men living

among the Kanakas) they were offered to and accepted by those only who, like Bishop Dordillon, had a close intimacy and sympathy with the natives.

Here is the rough sketch of their last berth in the Marquesas:—

"*24th August.*—Taahauku is a very little anchorage, set between low points sparsely wooded with young palms, and opening above upon a woody valley. The next bay, Atuona, is set in a theatre of lofty mountains which dominate the more immediate setting of Taahauku and give the salient character of the scene. In the morning, when the sun falls directly on their front, they stand like a vast wall greened to the summit, watercourses here and there delineated on their face as narrow as cracks. But towards afternoon the light comes more obliquely, gorges yawn in undecipherable shadow, spurs and buttresses stand out, carved in sunlight; the whole range looks higher and more solemn, and wears a stern appearance of romance. It looks, and it very nearly is, impassable: shutting off the southwest corner of the island save by way of sea. A great part of the charm of Taahauku itself lies in the dominant contrast of that mountain barrier.

"The climate is that of the trade-winds; all night long, in fine weather, the same attenuated snowy clouds fleet over the moonlit heaven, or hang in mists upon the mountain, and day and night, save for the chill draughts of the land breeze, the same slightly varying and squally wind blows overhead. On one side of the anchorage the surf leaps white upon the rocks and keeps a certain blow-hole sounding and smoking like a cannon. The other side is smoother but still rocky;

and the accepted landing-place is on the narrow beach at the shore end, where, after a race through the breaking waves, the seaman is landed in a somewhat damp condition. In front of him a little copra warehouse stands in the shadow of some trees, flitted about for ever by a clan of dwarfish swallows. A line of rails bends out of the mouth of the valley and comes to the bend of the beach; walking on which the newly arrived traveller presently becomes aware of a beautiful fresh-water lagoon, with a boat-house, and behind that a grove of noble cocos."

But the time had come to start for Tahiti by a course lying through the Paumotus or Dangerous Archipelago, a group of numerous low islands, unlighted save for one or two pier-head lamps, and most inadequately laid down upon the chart.

For this reason at Taiohae they had shipped a mate who knew those waters well. The much-travelled Japanese cook had been returned to his home, and his place taken by a genuine Chinaman. Ah Fu came to the Marquesas as a child and had grown up among the natives; he now followed the fortunes of his new masters with entire devotion for two years, until the claims of his family were asserted and took him home reluctantly to China.[1]

[1] Mrs. Stevenson writes: "In fact it broke his heart to go. Ah Fu had as strong a sense of romance as Louis himself. He returned to China with a belt of gold round his waist, a ninety-dollar breech-loader given him by Louis, and a boxful of belongings. His intention was to leave these great riches with a member of the family who lived outside the village, dress himself in beggar's rags, and go to his mother's house to solicit alms. He would draw from her the account of the son who had been lost when he was a little child; at the psy-

On September 4th the *Casco* sailed, and three days later, before sunset, the captain expected to sight the first of the Paumotus.

It was not, however, till sunrise on the following morning that they saw land, and then it was not the island they had expected to make; in place of having been driven to the west, they had been swept by a current some thirty miles in the opposite direction. The first atoll was "flat as a plate in the sea, and spiked with palms of disproportioned altitude." The next, seen some hours later, was "lost in blue sea and sky: a ring of white beach, green underwood, and tossing palms, gem-like in colour; of a fairy, of a heavenly prettiness. The surf was all round it, white as snow, and broke at one point, far to seaward, on what seems an uncharted reef."

Night fell again, and found them amid a wilderness of reefs corresponding so little with the maps that the schooner must lie to and wait for the morning.

The next day they ran on to Fakarava, and entered

chological moment, when the poor lady was weeping, Ah Fu would cry out: 'Behold your son returned to you, not a beggar, as I appear, but a man of wealth!' Ah Fu's last speech to me was very unlike what one expects from a Chinaman. As well as I can recollect, he said: 'You think I no solly go way? I too much solly. My mother she forget me. You heart my mother. You my mother, not that woman. When boss go way to Molokai, you look see me? I no smile, no smile, allee time, work littee, go see ship come — work littee, go look see. Boss come, I make big feast. You go way, I no go look see ship; I no can, I no see, too much cly allee time in my eyes. You come, I smile, smile, no can make feast; my heart too muchee glad, no can cook.'"

Then China reabsorbed him, and he was seen no more.

the lagoon in safety. It was a typical low island, some eighty miles in circumference by a couple of hundred yards broad, chosen to be the headquarters of the government only on account of two excellent passages in the barrier reef, one of which was sure to be always available.

In one respect they were fortunate: "We were scarce well headed for the pass before all heads were craned over the rail. For the water, shoaling under our board, became changed in a moment to surprising hues of blue and grey; and in its transparency the coral branched and blossomed, and the fish of the inland sea cruised visibly below us, stained and striped, and even beaked like parrots. . . . I have since entered, I suppose, some dozen atolls in different parts of the Pacific, and the experience has never been repeated. That exquisite hue and transparency of submarine day, and these shoals of rainbow fish, have not enraptured me again."[1]

A fortnight spent in Fakarava passed uneventfully away. There were few inhabitants left on the island, which was never very populous at any time. Stevenson lived ashore in a house among the palms, where he learned much of the natives and their customs and beliefs from the half-caste Vice-Resident, M. Donat.

The chief wealth of the group lay in the beds of pearl-shell, but of this there was nothing to be seen at Fakarava. "In the lagoon was little pearl-shell, and there were many sharks. . . . There was no fishing, and it seemed unfit to leave the archipelago of pearls and have no sight of that romantic industry. On all other sides were isles, if I could only reach them, where

[1] *In the South Seas*, p. 167.

divers were at work; but Captain Otis properly enough refused to approach them with the *Casco*, and my attempts to hire another vessel failed. The last was upon François' cutter, where she lay down-up from her late shipwreck. She might be compared for safety to a New York cat-boat fortified with a bowsprit and a jib; and as I studied her lines and spars, desire to sail in her upon the high seas departed from my mind. 'Je le pensais bien,' said François."

In the last week of September they left for Tahiti, and in two days were anchored safely at Papeete, the capital and port of entry of the Society group. Beautiful as all the high islands of the South Seas are, it is in Tahiti and its neighbours — the Otaheite of Captain Cook — that the extreme point of sublimity and luxuriance is reached. The vegetation is not less lovely, nor the streams and waterfalls less beautiful or less abundant than elsewhere, but the crags and pinnacles of the lofty mountains there are far more picturesque, and so abrupt that they are not smothered in the greenery which gives an appearance of tameness to other islands in the same latitudes.

Stevenson and his wife lived ashore in a small house, where he prepared his correspondence for the outgoing mail. He was very unwell; he went nowhere, saw no one of any interest, native or foreign, and soon grew tired of Papeete. A cold caught at Fakarava increased, with access of fever and an alarming cough. He mended a little, but Papeete was not a success, so after a time the *Casco*, with a pilot on board, took the party round to Taravao, on the south side of the island. On this passage they were twice nearly lost. The first day they had a long beat off the lee-shore of the island

of Eimeo; and the following day were suddenly becalmed, and began to drift towards the barrier reef of Tahiti. "The reefs were close in," wrote Stevenson,[1] "with, my eye! what a surf! The pilot thought we were gone, and the captain had a boat cleared, when a lucky squall came to our rescue. My wife, hearing the order given about the boats, remarked to my mother, 'Is n't that nice? We shall soon be ashore!' Thus does the female mind unconsciously skirt along the verge of eternity." Their danger was undoubtedly great, greater far than they suspected.

The atmosphere at Taravao was close, and mosquitoes were numerous; by this time Stevenson was so ill that it was necessary, without a moment's delay, to secure more healthy quarters. Accordingly his wife went ashore, and following a path, discovered the shanty of a Chinaman who owned a wagon and a pair of horses. These she hired to take them to Tautira, the nearest village of any size, a distance of sixteen miles over a road crossed by one-and-twenty streams. Stevenson was placed in the cart, and, sustained by small doses of coca, managed, with the help of his wife and Valentine, to reach his destination before he collapsed altogether. Being introduced at Tautira by the gendarme, they were asked an exorbitant rent for a suitable house, but they secured it, and there made the patient as comfortable as possible. The next day there arrived the Princess Moë, ex-Queen of Raiatea, one of the kindest and most charming of Tahitians, who lives in the pages of Pierre Loti and Miss Gordon Cumming. She had come to the village, and hearing there was a

[1] *Letters*, ii. 137.

white man very ill, she came over to the house. "I feel that she saved Louis' life," writes Mrs. Stevenson. "He was lying in a deep stupor when she first saw him, suffering from congestion of the lungs and in a burning fever. As soon as he was well enough, she invited us to live with her in the house of Ori, the sub-chief of the village, and we gladly accepted her invitation."

Meanwhile, at Taravao, it was discovered that the schooner's jib-boom was sprung; it was duly spliced, and when Stevenson was really better, the *Casco* came round to Tautira. Here a more startling discovery was made, and the party learned what their true position had been two or three weeks before. The elder Mrs. Stevenson gave a feast on board to the women of Tautira, and one old lady offered up a prayer, asking that if anything were wrong with the masts it might be discovered in time. As soon as the guests were gone, the Yankee skipper, acting no doubt on the principle of keeping his powder dry, went aloft, and subjected the masts to a close examination. They were both almost eaten out with dry-rot. Had either of them gone by the board during the voyage in the Moorea channel, or off the reefs in any of the islands, nothing could have saved the *Casco,* even if her passengers and crew had escaped in one of the boats. It was now considered hardly safe for any one to remain on deck; but, with many reefs in her mainsail, the schooner was sent to Papeete, where the masts were patched up as far as was possible, no new spars of sufficient size being obtainable.

The intended visit to the neighbouring islands of

Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora was abandoned, Stevenson and his party remaining at Tautira until the *Casco* should be ready to take them back to civilisation. His health again recovered, and he enjoyed the new conditions of life beyond words — scenery, climate, and company. Tautira was "the most beautiful spot" and "its people the most amiable" he had ever encountered. Except for the French gendarme and Père Bruno, the priest, a Dutchman from Amsterdam who had forgotten his own language, the travellers had passed beyond the range of Europeans and lived in a Tahiti touched as little as might be by any foreign influence. They dwelt in one of the curious "bird-cage" houses of the island, and were on the friendliest terms with all the village.

Their host, Ori, was a perpetual delight to them all. "A Life-guardsman in appearance," as Mr. Osbourne describes him, "six foot three in bare feet; deep and broad in proportion; unconsciously English to an absurd extent; feared, respected, and loved."

It was one of the happiest periods in the exile's life, and perhaps in consequence his "journal," an irregularly kept notebook, was dropped, never to be resumed. And so it happens that to this passage in his life he never returned, pen in hand, and of it he has left no other record than one or two pages in his correspondence.

He "actually went sea-bathing almost every day"; he collected songs and legends, materials for the great book; he began to work once more at his novel, *The Master of Ballantrae*, and "almost finished" it. At Moë's instance special exhibitions of the old songs and dances of Tahiti were given for him in the hall of assembly in Tautira. He was adopted into the clan of

the Tevas, to which Ori belonged, and exchanged names with that chief, who thenceforward signed himself as "Rui," [1] Louis himself receiving also, in more formal fashion, the name of Teriitera.

He now wrote the greater part of his two Polynesian ballads, *The Feast of Famine*, relating to the Marquesas, and *The Song of Rahéro*, a genuine legend of the Tevas. In the same days, however, his music brought him to write for the old Scots tune of "Wandering Willie" that most pathetic cry of his exile—

"Home no more home to me, whither must I wander?"

almost the only complaint, even in a dramatic form, that he ever allowed himself to make.

The repairs of the *Casco* took an unexpected time; the weather became bad, and a stormy sea and rivers in flood prevented any communication between Tautira and Papeete. The visitors used up all their money: Ori had taken charge of it for them and doled it out, a small piece at a time, until all was gone. Their supplies of food being exhausted, they were reduced to living on the bounty of the natives, and though Stevenson himself continued to eat sucking-pig with continual enjoyment, the others pined for a change. When time passed and no ship came, the whole country-side began to join in their anxiety. Each morning, as soon as the dawn lifted, a crowd ran to the beach, and the cry came back: "*E ita pahi!*" (No ship.)

At last Ori took a party of young men in a whaleboat, although the weather was still bad, and went to Papeete to find out the cause of the delay. "When

[1] *I.e.* Louis: there being no L in Tahitian.

Ori left," says Mrs. Stevenson, "we besought him not to go, for we knew he was risking the lives of himself and his men. Then he was gone a week overtime, which made us heart-sick. He brought back the necessary money and a store of provisions, and a letter from the captain telling us when to look for him. Amongst the food was a basket of champagne. The next day we gave a commemoration dinner to Ori, when we produced the champagne. Ori drank his glass and announced it beyond excellence, a drink for chiefs. 'I shall drink it continually,' he added, pouring out a fresh glass. 'What is the cost of it by the bottle?' Louis told him, whereupon Ori solemnly replaced his full glass, saying, 'It is not fit that even kings should drink a wine so expensive!' It took him days to recover from the shock."

At last the *Casco* was ready for sea, and on Christmas Day the party embarked for Honolulu. The farewell with Ori was heart-breaking, and all vowed never again to stay so long as two months in one place, or to form so deep and yet so brief a friendship.

They sighted the outlying Paumotus and the mail schooner, and after that their voyage was without other incident than squalls and calms. For a while they skirted hurricane weather, though nothing came of it; but between calms and contrary winds their progress was slow, and they nearly ran out of provisions. "We were nearly a week hanging about the Hawaiian group," says Mr. Osbourne, "drifting here and there with different faint slants of wind. We had little luxuries kept back for our farewell dinner — which took place at least three times with a diminishing splendour that finally

struck bottom on salt horse. It was a strange experience to see the distant lights of Honolulu, and then go to bed hungry; to rise again in the morning and find ourselves, not nearer, but further off. When at last the weather altered and we got our wind, it was a snoring Trade, and we ran into the harbour like a steamboat. It was a dramatic entry for the overdue and much-talked-of *Casco*, flashing past the buoys and men-of-war, with the pilot in a panic of alarm. If the *Casco* ever did thirteen knots, she did it then."

Arrived at Honolulu they found that their safety had been despaired of by all, including even Mrs. Stevenson's daughter, Mrs. Strong, who was then living there with her husband and child.

Of the capital city of the Hawaiian kingdom it is difficult to give any true impression, so curious in those days was the mixture of native life and civilisation. To any one coming from the islands it seemed a purely American city — not of the second or even of the third rank, modified only by its position in the verge of the tropics; for any one who entered these latitudes and saw a native population for the first time, it must have been picturesque and exotic beyond words.

Stevenson sent the yacht back to San Francisco, and took a house at Waikiki, some four miles from Honolulu along the coast. Here he took up his abode in a *lanai*— a sort of large pavilion, off which the bedrooms opened, built on native lines, and provided only with jalousied shutters; and here he settled down in earnest to finish *The Master of Ballantrae* — "the hardest job I ever had to do"— already running in *Scribner's Magazine*, and to be completed within a given time.

He did not end his task till May — "*The Master* is finished, and I am quite a wreck and do not care for literature" — for it went against the grain, with the result that the Canadian scenes have the effect rather of a hasty expedient than of the deliberate climax of the plot.[1] So careful was Stevenson in his workmanship, and so accurate in his knowledge of Scotland, that it is curious to find him stumbling at the very outset of his tale, and giving an impossible title to his hero, for by invariable Scottish usage James Durie would have been "Master of Durrisdeer" and not "of Ballantrae." Stevenson was afterwards aware of the slip, but had fancied that there were instances to the contrary. However, his cousin, Sir James Balfour Paul, Lyon King-at-Arms, tells me that he can find "no exact precedent for the eldest son of a baron assuming a title as Master differing in name from that which his father bore."[2]

But this was a point of mere antiquarian detail, which in no way interfered with the appreciation of his read-

[1] Compare vol. ii. p. 38.

[2] The only other slip in reference to Scotland which, so far as I am aware, has been found in Stevenson's works, is the statement that Gaelic was still spoken in Fife as late as the middle of the eighteenth century (*Catriona*, p. 191; *Letters*, ii. 248). This was based on a statement of Burt to the effect that the families of Fife, when their sons went to the Lowlands as apprentices, made it a condition in the indentures of apprenticeship that they should be taught English. Sheriff Æneas Mackay, the chief historical authority on Fife, very kindly informs me that he doubts the fact and the authority of Burt, and after adducing various evidence against the possibility of this survival, concludes: "The Ochils bordered on the Celtic line, and I should not like to affirm that Gaelic may not have lingered there till the sixteenth century. I don't think it did later, or that it was habitually spoken after the twelfth or thirteenth century."

ers; and when the story was finally published in the autumn, it was at once recognised on all hands as the sternest and loftiest note of tragedy which its author had yet delivered. "I 'm not strong enough to stand writing of that kind," said Sir Henry Yule, on his death-bed, to Mr. Crockett, who had been reading it to him; "it 's grim as the road to Lucknow."

In the meantime, though Stevenson was constantly unwell, even his want of health at the worst of these times was very different from his invalid life at Bournemouth. He retired with his wife to a small and less draughty cottage about a hundred yards from the *lanai*, and there continued his work as before.

The little colony was very comfortably settled. Valentine had left their service and departed to America, but Ah Fu had established himself in the kitchen with his pots and pans.

In spite of his worse health, Stevenson was able to go about as usual, and saw a good many people, especially in the large circle of his stepdaughter's acquaintance. Through this connection he found from the beginning a ready *entrée* to the Royal Palace, where Kalakaua, the last of the Hawaiian kings, held his court of Yvetot: a large, handsome, genial, dissipated monarch, a man of real ability and iron constitution, versed beyond any of his subjects in the history and legends of his kingdom. From the very beginning of the acquaintance his relations with Stevenson were most friendly in no conventional sense. They genuinely liked one another from the start, and Kalakaua, holding out every inducement, really tried very hard to get his visitor to settle in Hawaii.

At Honolulu Stevenson already began to hear a good deal of Samoa and its troubles, for several of his new friends had formed part of the amazing embassy Kalakaua had sent to Apia in the preceding year to propose a native federation of the Polynesian Islands. It was on the information now received that he was driven to write the first of his letters to the *Times*.

The letter appeared on the 11th March, and before the week was out there occurred the great Samoan hurricane which sunk or stranded six men-of-war in the harbour of Apia, when the *Calliope* alone, by virtue of her engines, steamed out of the gap in the very teeth of the gale.

Immediately afterwards, Stevenson records a curious episode at Honolulu in a letter to Mr. Baxter:—

"*27th April, 1889.* — A pretty touch of seaman manners: the English and American Jacks are deadly rivals: well, after all this hammering of both sides by the Germans, and then the news of the hurricane from Samoa, a singular scene occurred here the Sunday before last. The two church parties *sponte propria* fell in line together, one Englishman to one American, and marched down to the harbour like one ship's company. None were more surprised than their own officers. I have seen a hantle of the seaman on this cruise; I always liked him before; my first crew on the *Casco* (five sea-lawyers) near cured me; but I have returned to my first love."

At Samoa we shall see that he had many friends in the navy; and in nothing did he take more delight than in their company and friendship. Of this there was already a beginning at Honolulu with the wardroom of

H. B. M. S. *Cormorant.* "I had been twice to lunch on board, and H. B. M.'s seamen are making us hammocks; so we are very naval. But alas, the *Cormorant* is only waiting her relief, and I fear there are not two ships of that stamp in all the navies of the world."

The hammocks were part of his preparations for a new cruise. He had arrived with the intention of crossing America during the course of the summer, and so returning to England, with ultimate views of Madeira as a winter refuge. But even Honolulu was too cold for him, and by the end of March he was full of another scheme of South Sea travel. This time his voyage was to be to the Gilbert Islands to the southwest, on board the vessel belonging to the Boston Mission or whatever other craft he could induce to take him. His mother decided to return to Scotland and visit her sister, but his wife and stepson looked eagerly forward to sharing with him this new experience.

In the end of April he paid a visit by himself to the lee-shore of the island of Hawaii, which is seen by tourists only, if at all, upon their way to the active crater of Kilauea, situated on the slopes of the lofty volcano of Mauna Loa. Even the lower crater is four thousand feet above the sea, and the climate in that region is often bleak and rainy. Accordingly Stevenson did not turn his steps in its direction, but spent a week on the coast-lands, living with a native judge, taking long rides, and seeing and learning as much of native life and characteristics as lay within his reach; the most thrilling event of the visit being the departure of some natives to be immured in the lazaretto of Molokai.

A month later he visited the island of Molokai itself, and spent by special permission a week in the leper settlement. Father Damien had died on the 15th of April, so that Stevenson heard only by report of the man whose memory he did so much to vindicate.

The scene of Damien's labours is one of the most striking places in the world. A low promontory, some three miles long, with a village upon either side of it, lies at the foot of a beetling precipice that shuts it off from the remainder of the island, to which there is no access except by a most difficult bridle-track. Hither, since 1865, have been sent all persons in the group who are found to have contracted leprosy, and here they are tended by doctor and priest, by officers and sisters and nurses, until they die. Who can do justice to such a place, to such a scene? Here Stevenson spent a week, and afterwards wrote a fragmentary and incomplete account of his visit. The best record of it is contained in the letters written at the time to his wife, and shortly afterwards to James Payn and Mr. Colvin. The description of his landing cannot be omitted.

"Our lepers were sent [from the steamer] in the first boat, about a dozen, one poor child very horrid, one white man leaving a large grown family behind him in Honolulu, and then into the second stepped the sisters and myself. I do not know how it would have been with me had the sisters not been there. My horror of the horrible is about my weakest point; but the moral loveliness at my elbow blotted all else out; and when I found that one of them was crying, poor soul, quietly under her veil, I cried a little myself; then I felt as right as a trivet, only a little crushed to be there so uselessly.

I thought it was a sin and a shame she should feel unhappy; I turned round to her, and said something like this: 'Ladies, God himself is here to give you welcome. I 'm sure it is good for me to be beside you; I hope it will be blessed to me; I thank you for myself and the good you do me.' It seemed to cheer her up; but indeed I had scarce said it when we were at the landing-stairs, and there was a great crowd, hundreds of (God save us!) pantomime masks in poor human flesh, waiting to receive the sisters and the new patients.

". . . Gilfillan, a good fellow, I think, and far from a stupid, kept up his hard Lowland Scottish talk in the boat while the sister was covering her face; but I believe he knew, and did it (partly) in embarrassment, and part perhaps in mistaken kindness. And that was one reason, too, why I made my speech to them. Partly, too, I did it because I was ashamed to do so, and remembered one of my golden rules, 'When you are ashamed to speak, speak up at once.' But, mind you, that rule is only golden with strangers; with your own folks, there are other considerations."[1]

His general conclusions at the time were thus expressed:—"On the whole, the spectacle of life in this marred and moribund community, with its idleness, its furnished table, its horse-riding, music, and gallantries under the shadow of death, confounds the expectations of the visitor. He cannot observe with candour, but he must see it is not only good for the world, but best for the lepers themselves to be thus set apart. The place is a huge hospital, but a hospital under extraordinary conditions; in which the disease, though both

[1] *Letters*, ii. 154–156.

ugly and incurable, is of a slow advance; in which the patients are rarely in pain, often capable of violent exertion, all bent on pleasure, and all, within the limits of the precinct, free. . . . The case of the children is by far the most sad; and yet (thanks to Damien, and that great Hawaiian lady, the kind Mrs. Bishop, and to the kind sisters) their hardship has been minimised. Even the boys in the still rude boys' home at Kalawao appeared cheerful and youthful; they interchange diversions in the boy's way; one week are all for football, and the next the devotees of marbles or of kites: have fiddles, drums, guitars, and penny whistles: some can touch the organ, and all combine in concerts. As for the girls in the Bishop Home, of the many beautiful things I have been privileged to see in life, they, and what has been done for them, are not the least beautiful. When I came there first, the sisters and the majority of the boarders were gone up the hill upon a weekly treat, guava-hunting; and only Mother Mary Anne and the specially sick were left at home. I was told things which I heard with tears, of which I sometimes think at night, and which I spare the reader; I was shown the sufferers then at home; one, I remember, white with pain, the tears standing in her eyes. But, thank God, pain is not the rule in this revolting malady: and the general impression of the house was one of cheerfulness, cleanliness, and comfort. The dormitories were airy, the beds neatly made; at every bed-head was a trophy of Christmas cards, pictures, and photographs, some framed with shells, and all arranged with care and taste. In many of the beds, besides, a doll lay pillowed. I was told that, in that artificial life, the eldest and the

youngest were equally concerned with these infantile playthings, and the dressmaking, in particular, was found an inexhaustible resource. Plays of their own arrangement were a favourite evening pastime. They had a croquet set; and it was my single useful employment during my stay in the lazaretto to help them with that game.[1] I know not if the interest in croquet survived my departure, but it was lively while I stayed; and the last time I passed there on my way to the steamer's boat and freedom, the children crowded to the fence and hailed and summoned me with cries of welcome. I wonder I found the heart to refuse the invitation."

After leaving the confines of the leper settlement the steamer landed him upon another part of the island, where he and the captain took horse and rode a long way to the house of some Irish folk, where Stevenson slept. Next day he continued with a native guide until he reached the summit of the pass above Kalawao, down which alone the settlement could be entered by land. Here the overseer lived, and with him Stevenson stayed and had much talk.

Of his ride across the island he wrote:—"Maui behind us towered into clouds and the shadow of clouds. The bare opposite island of Lanai — the reef far out, enclosing a dirty, shoal lagoon — a range of fish-ponds, large as docks, and the slope of the shady beach

[1] He was advised by Mother Mary Anne to wear gloves when he played croquet with the leper children. He would not do it, however, as he thought it might remind them of their condition. After he returned to Honolulu he sent Mother Mary Anne a grand piano for her leper girls.

on which we mostly rode, occupied the left hand. On the right hand the mountain rose in steeps of red clay and spouts of disintegrated rock, sparsely dotted with the white-flowering cow-thistle. Here and there along the foreshore stood a lone pandanus, and once a trinity of dishevelled palms. In all the first part of that journey, I recall but three houses and a single church. Plenty of horses, kine, and sullen-looking bulls were there, but not a human countenance. 'Where are the people?' I asked. '*Pau Kanaka maké:* done: people dead,' replied the guide, with the singular childish giggle which the traveller soon learns to be a mark of Polynesian sensibility.

"We rode all the time by the side of the great fish-ponds, the labour (you would say) of generations. The riches and the agriculture of Molokai awoke of yore the envy of neighbouring kings. Only last century a battle was fought upon this island in which it has been computed that thousands were engaged; and he who made the computation, though he lived long after, had seen and counted, when the wind blew aside the sands, the multitude of bones and skulls. There remains the evidence of the churches, not yet old and already standing in a desert, the monuments of vanished congregations. *Pau Kanaka maké.* A sense of survival attended me upon my ride, and the nervous laughter of Apaka sounded in my ears not quite unpleasantly. The place of the dead is clean; there is a poetry in empty lands.

"A greener track received us; smooth shore-side grass was shaded with groves and islets of acacias; the hills behind, from the red colour of the soil and the sin-

gularity of the formation, had the air of a bare Scottish moorland in the bleak end of autumn; and the resemblance set a higher value on the warmth of the sun and the brightness of the sea. I wakened suddenly to remember Kalaupapa and my playmates of two days before. Could I have forgotten? Was I happy again? Had the shadow, the sorrow, and the obligation faded already?"

From this expedition he returned to complete his preparations for immediate departure. The family now possessed an unrivalled fund of information about "the Islands," and had accumulated not only the necessary stores but also a collection of all the resources of civilisation best fitted to appeal to the native heart, ranging from magic lanterns and American hand-organs to "cheap and bad cigars." The only difficulty was the ship, and the *Morning Star* not being available, the *Equator*, a trading schooner of sixty-two tons register, Captain Denis Reid, was chartered. The terms agreed upon were original and entertaining; Stevenson paid a lump sum down for a four months' cruise, with a proviso for renewal, if necessary. The ship agreed for a fixed daily extra price to land at any place in the line of its trading cruise on Stevenson's written demand. On the other hand, when it stopped anywhere for its own business, were it only to land a sewing-machine or to take on board a ton of copra, it was bound, if the charterer so desired, to remain there three days without extra charge.

The 24th of June arrived: Stevenson and his wife and stepson were on board with the indispensable Ah Fu, and the schooner was ready to cast off. At the

last moment two fine carriages drove down at full speed to the wharf and there deposited King Kalakaua and a party of his native musicians. There was but a minute for good-bye and a parting glass, for Kalakaua had none of Ori's scruples over champagne. The king returned to shore and stood there waving his hand, while from the musicians, lined up on the very edge of the wharf, came the tender strains of a farewell.

CHAPTER XIV

SOUTH SEA CRUISES—THE CENTRAL PACIFIC, JUNE, 1889—APRIL, 1891

"I will never leave the sea, I think; it is only there that a Briton lives: my poor grandfather, it is from him that I inherit the taste, I fancy, and he was round many islands in his day; but I, please God, shall beat him at that before the recall is sounded. . . . Life is far better fun than people dream who fall asleep among the chimney-stacks and telegraph wires."—*Letters*, ii. 162.

THE object of the new cruise for Stevenson was to visit a native race of a different character from those he had already seen, living as far as was still possible under purely natural conditions. The Gilberts are a group of some sixteen low islands of no great size, densely populated, situated close to the Equator. At this time they were independent, nearly every island being governed by its own king or council of elders. Scenery in all of them is reduced to the simplest elements, a strand with cocoanut-palms and pandanus, and the sea—one island differing from another only in having or not having an accessible lagoon in its centre; in none of them is the highest point of land as much as twenty feet above sea-level. This very flatness and absence of striking features render the islands a more perfect theatre for effects of light and cloud, while the splendours of the sea are further enhanced by the contrast of the rollers breaking on the reef and the still lagoon sleeping within the barrier, of the dark depths of ocean outside and the brilliant shoal-water varying

infinitely in hue with the inequalities of the shallows within.

Stevenson's former experience lay, his future was almost entirely to lie, among the Polynesians—the tall, fine, copper-coloured race, speaking closely allied dialects of the same language, and including among their family the Hawaiians, Marquesans, Tahitians, Samoans, and the Maoris of New Zealand. The Gilbert and Marshall natives, on the other hand, are Micronesians—darker, shorter, and to my taste less comely folk—speaking languages widely removed from the Polynesian—people with a dash of black blood, stricter in morals and more ferocious, with an energy and backbone which the others but rarely possess. It is noteworthy that Polynesians never commit suicide; on the Line it is not uncommon; and the frequent causes are unrequited love, or grief for the dead.

When this visit should be finished, the travellers were not finally committed to any plan, but their latest intention was to proceed to the Marshalls and thence to the Carolines, and so "return to the light of day by way of Manila and the China ports."

Scarcely, however, were they at sea before these schemes were modified. One moonlight night, in the neighbourhood of Johnstone Island, the talk fell upon the strange history of the loss of the brigantine *Wandering Minstrel*, and from this germ was quickly developed the plot of *The Wrecker*. The life of cruising was for the time all that Stevenson could desire: after the depression of Honolulu he had entirely recovered his health and spirits on the open sea, and the only difficulty in continuing his cure was its great expense.

Surely if he possessed a schooner of his own, he might make his home on board and pay the current charges, at all events in part, by trading. So *The Wrecker* was to be written and sent to a publisher from Samoa, and there with the proceeds they were to buy a schooner, stock the trade-room, and start upon their wanderings under the guidance of Denis Reid, who threw himself heart and soul into the spirit of the new venture.

It was a wild scheme. Versatile as Stevenson was, it is impossible even to think of him as a "South Sea merchant," haggling with natives over the price of copra[1] and retailing European goods to them at a necessarily exorbitant rate. But the project, though never realised, did finally determine the course of his life, for instead of taking him to Ponape, Guam, and the Philippines, it sent him south to Samoa, there to take up his abode and live and die.

In the meanwhile the first part of the voyage was safely performed, and the schooner arrived at the town of Butaritari in the island of Great Makin. Under ordinary conditions a white man, if he conducted himself reasonably, might wander through all the group in perfect safety, but the arrival of the *Equator* fell at an unpropitious moment. For the first and probably the only time in his wanderings, Stevenson was in real danger of violence from natives.

The two principal firms trading in Butaritari belonged to San Francisco; the missionaries in the group were sent there by the Boston Society, and the influence of American ideas was considerable. Nine days before

[1] The dried kernel of the cocoanut, largely used in making soap, candles, oil-cake, etc.

Stevenson's arrival was the Fourth of July; the king of Butaritari had observed the festival with enthusiasm, but not wisely, nor in accordance with missionary views, for he had removed the taboo upon spirits which ordinarily was imposed for all his subjects.

Neither sovereign nor courtiers had been sober since, and though, with a lofty Sabbatarianism, the king declined to be photographed upon a Sunday, it was not to be supposed that he could be refused more drink if he offered to purchase it at the usual price. There was this further difficulty in the way of restoring sobriety to his dominions, that even if one firm declined to supply him, there was the rival house, which, having as yet sold less of its liquor, might be less anxious for the special open season to come to an end. So the carnival continued for ten days more, and all the white men could do was to get out their pistols and show in public such skill as they possessed in shooting at a mark.

Twice a large stone was hurled at Stevenson as he sat in his verandah at dusk, just as the lamp was brought out and placed beside him. He now entered into negotiations with the German manager of the other firm, whom he found to take a far more serious view of the situation than any of them, and whom he induced by diplomacy to discontinue to supply the natives. The crisis was now reached: would the populace, irritated by refusal, carry either of the bars with a rush?

Fortunately all passed off smoothly. The king came to his senses, and the taboo was re-imposed. Quiet was restored, and only just in time, for a day or two

later a large body of rather turbulent natives arrived from the next island for a dance competition, quite ready to profit by any political trouble.

The danger having been averted, the party lived at peace in the house of Maka, the Hawaiian missionary, one of the most lovable of men. They saw the dances, they gave exhibitions of their magic lantern, and as all pictures were supposed to be photographs, and photographs could only be taken from actual scenes, their slides of Bible history brought about a distinct religious reaction among the people. They made friends with various natives, but the end of their stay was by comparison tame and dull, and after about a month the *Equator* returned and carried them away.

The terms of the elaborate charter party were entirely disregarded. The captain from the beginning acted as though the vessel were Stevenson's yacht, and went or stayed according to the wishes of his passenger. Stevenson, on his part, took a keen interest in the ship's fortunes, and was as eager to secure copra as any one on board. The captain acted as showman of the group. "I remember once," says Mr. Osbourne, "that he banged the deck with a marlinspike and called below to Louis: 'Come on deck, quick, Kaupoi; here 's the murderer and the poisoner I told you of, coming off in a boat.'" It was Stevenson's fate in the Pacific, at the times when he was most anxious about his finances, to be regarded by the natives as the wealthiest of men, and addressed accordingly. Thus "Kaupoi" in the Gilberts and "Ona" in Samoa are equivalent to "Dives," or "Richie," as Stevenson himself used to render it. "Ona," by the way, is not a genuine

Samoan word, but "owner," the wealthy and powerful person whom even ship-captains obey.

They visited the island of Nonuti, and were then continuing on a southward course, when the wind veered and they made for Apemama, a large island ruled by the despot Tembinok', who allowed no white man in his kingdom. As an exceptional favour, however, granted only after a long inspection of the party and two days devoted to consideration, Stevenson and his family were admitted as the special guests of the king. He cleared a site for them, pitched four houses upon it for their accommodation, and tabooed with a death penalty their well and their enclosure against all his subjects. The settlement was begun to the discharge of a rifle; the cook who was lent to the Stevensons, and was guilty of gross misbehaviour, received six shots from the king's Winchester over his head, at his feet, and on either side of him; and though no life was actually taken while the white men were on the island, yet the power of life and death in the king's hands was plainly shown to be no obsolete prerogative.

In Apemama the party spent a couple of months in daily intercourse with this very remarkable personage, with whom they entered into close relations of friendship. Of all the chiefs Stevenson knew in the Pacific, Ori, the Tahitian, was probably the one for whom he had most affection; Mataafa, in Samoa, probably he most respected; but Tembinok' was unquestionably the strongest character, and the man who interested him the most. Who that has read the South Sea chapters has forgotten his appearance?

"A beaked profile like Dante's in the mask, a mane

of long black hair, the eye brilliant, imperious, and inquiring; for certain parts in the theatre, and to one who could have used it, the face was a fortune. His voice matched it well, being shrill, powerful, and uncanny, with a note like a sea-bird's. Where there are no fashions, none to set them, few to follow them if they were set, and none to criticise, he dresses—as Sir Charles Grandison lived—'to his own heart.' Now he wears a woman's frock, now a naval uniform, now (and more usually) figures in a masquerade costume of his own design—trousers and a singular jacket with shirt-tails, the cut and fit wonderful for island workmanship, the material always handsome, sometimes green velvet, sometimes cardinal-red silk. This masquerade becomes him admirably. I see him now come pacing towards me in the cruel sun, solitary, a figure out of Hoffmann."[1]

In spite of this grotesque disguise, there was nothing ridiculous about the man. He had been a fighter and a conqueror, "the Napoleon" of his group; he was, besides, a poet, a collector, the sole trader and man of business, and a shrewd judge of mankind. Having admitted the missionaries to his island, he had learned to read and write; having found the missionaries interfering, as he thought, with his trade and his government, without hesitation he had banished them from his domains.

For the account of this unique society, this masterful sway, I must refer the reader to the seventy pages of Stevenson's own description, which were the part of his diary least disappointing to himself. It could hardly

[1] *In the South Seas*, p. 310.

be told in fewer words, and extracts can do it no justice. It is the more valuable in that it represents a state of things which is gone for ever. Only four years later, when I visited the island, all was changed. Tembinok' was dead, the Gilbert Islands had been annexed by Great Britain, and a boy was king under the direction of a British Resident. How severe the old discipline had been was proclaimed by a large "speak-house" at Tuagana, some two hours' sail down the coast, where all round the interior of the house, at the end of the roof-beams, there had been a set of eight-and-forty human skulls, of which nearly twenty were still remaining. The house had been built by Tembinok"s father, and the heads were those of malefactors, both white and native, or, at all events, of people who had caused displeasure to the king. The Stevensons had never heard of the existence of this place from Tembinok', though his father's grave was here, and here also were lying the two finest sea-going canoes in all the island.

But for the history of Tembinok', and for Stevenson's experience—how he was mesmerised for a cold by a native wizard, and how, with many searchings of conscience, he bought for Mr. Andrew Lang the devil-box of Apemama, the reader must go—and will thank me for sending him—to Stevenson's own pages. I will quote here only the king's leave-taking of his guest, and the impression which Stevenson had produced upon this wild, stern, and original nature:—

"As the time approached for our departure Tembinok' became greatly changed; a softer, more melancholy, and, in particular, a more confidential man appeared in his stead. To my wife he contrived laboriously to ex-

plain that though he knew he must lose his father in the course of nature, he had not minded nor realised it till the moment came; and that now he was to lose us, he repeated the experience. We showed fireworks one evening on the terrace. It was a heavy business; the sense of separation was in all our minds, and the talk languished. The king was specially affected, sat disconsolate on his mat, and often sighed. Of a sudden one of the wives stepped forth from a cluster, came and kissed him in silence, and silently went again. It was just such a caress as we might give to a disconsolate child, and the king received it with a child's simplicity. Presently after we said good-night and withdrew; but Tembinok' detained Mr. Osbourne, patting the mat by his side and saying: 'Sit down. I feel bad, I like talk.' 'You like some beer?' said he; and one of the wives produced a bottle. The king did not partake, but sat sighing and smoking a meerschaum pipe. 'I very sorry you go,' he said at last. 'Miss Stlevens he good man, woman he good man, boy he good man; all good man. Woman he smart all the same man. My woman,' glancing towards his wives, 'he good woman, no very smart. I think Miss Stlevens he big chiep all the same cap'n man-o'-wa'. I think Miss Stlevens he rich man all the same me. All go schoona. I very sorry. My patha he go, my uncle he go, my cutcheons he go, Miss Stlevens he go: all go. You no see king cry before. King all the same man: feel bad, he cry. I very sorry.'

"In the morning it was the common topic in the village that the king had wept. To me he said: 'Last night I no can 'peak: too much here,' laying his hand upon his bosom. 'Now you go away all the same my

pamily. My brothers, my uncle go away. All the same.' This was said with a dejection almost passionate. . . . The same day he sent me a present of two corselets, made in the island fashion of plaited fibre, heavy and strong. One had been worn by his grandfather, one by his father, and, the gift being gratefully received, he sent me, on the return of his messengers, a third—that of his uncle. . . .

"The king took us on board in his own gig, dressed for the occasion in the naval uniform. He had little to say, he refused refreshments, shook us briefly by the hand, and went ashore again. That night the palm-tops of Apemama had dipped behind the sea, and the schooner sailed solitary under the stars."[1]

The remainder of Stevenson's notes on the Gilberts relate chiefly to the white, or, at any rate, the alien population of the group, which at that date was naturally a sort of No Man's Land—one of the last refuges for the scoundrels of the Pacific. Not that all the traders by any means were black sheep; some of them and some of the captains and mates working in those waters were decent fellows enough, but among them were thieves, murderers, and worse, patriots who showed an uncommon alacrity in changing their nationality when any man-of-war of their own government happened to come their way. When the Gilberts were finally annexed in 1892, a labour vessel took a shipload of these gentry on board, bound for a South American republic, which, fortunately for that State, they never reached—the vessel being lost at sea with all hands.

[1] *In the South Seas*, p. 378.

Of the stories that were then current Stevenson collected a number, and had he been a realist, his readers might have been depressed through many volumes by the gloom and squalor of these tragedies; as it was, he utilised only a little of what he had actually seen as material for the darker shadows in the romantic and spirited *Beach of Falesá*.

After returning to Butaritari, the *Equator*, with Stevenson and his party on board, left for Samoa. The trip was tedious but for the excitement of running by night between the three different positions assigned by the charts to a reef which possibly had no real existence. There were the usual squalls, in one of which, during the night, the safety of the ship depended entirely on the cutting of a rope. The foretopmast snapped across and the foresail downhaul fouled in the wreckage, but Ah Fu climbed to the top of the galley with his knife, and the position was saved. Next morning, however, the signal halyard had disappeared, nor was its loss accounted for until several weeks afterwards, when the Chinaman presented his mistress with a neat coil of the best quality of rope. He had once heard her admiring it, and took occasion of the squall and extremity of danger to procure it for her as a present.

The schooner arrived about the 7th of December at Apia, the capital and port of Upolu, the chief of the group known collectively as Samoa[1] or the Navigator

[1] The first two syllables are long: Sā-mōa; similarly Vāi-līma; but Fălĕ-sā. The first A in Ă-pīa is shorter, but the vowel-sounds throughout are as in Italian. The consonants are as in English, but g = ng. Thus Pagopago is pronounced Pangopango.

Islands, which Stevenson now saw for the first time, and which he had every intention of leaving finally within two months of his arrival.

The *Equator's* charter now came to an end. Hiring a cottage in the hamlet a mile above the town, Stevenson began to collect the material necessary for those chapters which should be allotted to Samoa in his book upon the South Seas. This obtained, he proposed to start at once for Sydney, and thence proceed to England.

The Samoan record, as he anticipated from the outset, would deal chiefly with the history of the recent war, and for this he engaged in a most painstaking and—so far as I can judge—most successful judicial investigation into the actual facts and the course of events within the last few years. It is difficult for any one who has not lived hard by a South Sea "Beach" to realise how contradictory and how elusive are its rumours, and how widely removed from anything of the nature of "evidence." But into this confused mass Stevenson plunged, making inquiries of every one to whose statements he could attach any importance, American or English or German (my order is alphabetical), and invoking the aid of interpreters for native sources of information. He weighed and sifted his information with the greatest care, and I have never heard any of the main results contested which were embodied in *A Foot-note to History*.

For the sake of this work he lived chiefly in Apia,[1] at the house of an American trader, Mr. H. J. Moors. He

[1] For convenience I have spoken throughout of the whole town as Apia, though the name is in strict usage limited to one of its four districts.

made the acquaintance of Colonel de Coëtlogon, the English consul, with whom he maintained the most friendly terms, who had been with Gordon in Khartoum; of Dr. Stuebel, the German Consul-General, perhaps the ablest and most enlightened, and certainly not the least honourable diplomatist that the Great Powers ever sent to the South Seas; of the Rev. W. E. Clarke and other members of the London Mission, his warm friends then and in later days; and especially of the high chief Mataafa, who impressed him at once as the finest of the Samoans.

It was the only time Stevenson ever lived in Apia or its immediate suburbs, and a few words in passing should be devoted to the Beach with which now, more than at any time, he was brought into contact. This term, common to other South Sea islands, comprises, as I understand, every white resident in a place who has not some position that can be definitely described: in the last instance it denotes the mere beach-combers, loafers or mean whites, although most people would include in it all persons of markedly less consideration than themselves. There was much kindliness and generosity even among the lowest, and not more want of energy or of scruple than might have been expected. There was also a genial readiness to believe rumours, balanced by a willingness to think no worse of the persons against whom they were told. It might have been described as a society for investigation but not for promulgation of the truth. The number of white or half-caste residents in Apia was supposed to be about three hundred, of whom about two-thirds were British subjects, the bulk of the remainder being Germans.

At first Stevenson was not greatly struck either by

the place or by the natives; the island was "far less beautiful than the Marquesas or Tahiti; a more gentle scene, gentler acclivities, a tamer face of nature; and this much aided, for the wanderer, by the great German plantations, with their countless regular avenues of palms." Nor was he "specially attracted by the people; but they are courteous; the women very attractive, and dress lovely; the men purposelike, well set up, tall, lean, and dignified."

In the end of December he made a boat expedition with Mr. Clarke some dozen miles to the east, partly on mission business, and partly on his own account to visit Tamasese, the chief whom the Germans had formerly set up as king; not long afterwards he made a similar journey to the west to Malua, where the London Mission have long had a training college for native students. It was on this latter occasion that he was first introduced to the natives by the Rev. J. E. Newell as "*Tusitala*," "*The Writer of Tales*," the name by which he was afterwards most usually known in Samoa. Here he gave an address which was translated for their benefit;[1] and a few days later he delivered a lecture in Apia upon his travels, on behalf of a native church, Dr. Stuebel taking the chair.

From his notes made on the first expedition I draw one or two passages, descriptive of Samoan customs and of Samoan scenery, which is nowhere more beautiful than in the inlet he then visited.

"*Dec. 31, '89.*

"At the mission station, the most enchanting scene: troops of children and young girls in that enchanting

[1] Appendix A.

diversity of bright attire which makes a joy to the eye of any Samoan festival; some in *tapa*[1] crinolined out, some in gaudy tabards, some in the sleeveless bodice of black velvet; one little girlie in a *titi* of russet leaves, herself crowned with the red flower of royalty, for all the world like a pantomime fairy, only her lendings were not of tinsel, but still glittered with the raindrops of the morning. They came in a certain order, one standing by to let another pass, these singing as they came, those as they waited. The strains were almost as pleasant to the ear as the colours and the bright young faces to the eye; the words were now conventional and applicable to any *malaga*, now composed or prepared against the present occasion. Each little gaudy band of choristers approached the open apse of the mission-house, where we sat installed, walking in loose array, their gifts of *taro*, or sugar-cane, shouldered gallantly like muskets, one girl in special finery leading with a chicken in her arms, and every foot in time; they paused some paces off, ending their compliment with more boisterous enunciation, rose to a last high note, and suddenly with a medley of shrill shouts hurled all their offerings one upon another in front of us, broke up their ranks with laughter, and dispersed. One of our boat's crew gathered up the offerings, and a high voice like a herald's proclaimed the name of the village and the number and nature of the gifts. And before he had well spoken a fresh troop was drawing near, with a new song. . . .

[1] *Tapa*, native cloth made of mulberry bark; *titi*, something between a girdle and a skirt; *malaga*, excursion, visiting party; *taro*, the edible root of the *Arum esculentum*.

"*Fagaloa, Dec. 31st.*

"Past Falefā, where the reef ends and the coaster enters on the open sea, all prettinesses, as if they were things of shelter, end. The hills are higher and more imminent, and here and there display naked crags. The surf beats on bluff rocks, still overhung with forest; the boat, still navigated foolishly near the broken water, is twisted to and fro with a drunken motion, in the backwash and broken water of the surf; and though to-day it is exceptionally smooth, another boat that crosses us appears only at intervals and for a moment on the blue crest of the swells. At last, rounding a long spit of rocks on which the sea runs wildly high, the bay, gulf, or rather (as the one true descriptive word) the loch of Fagaloa opens. The oarsmen rest awhile upon their oars. 'Thank you for your rowing,' says Mr. Clarke—the conventional allocution: the conventional answer comes, 'Thank you for your prayers'; and then, with a new song struck up, which sings the praise and narrates with some detail the career of Mr. Clarke himself, we begin to enter the enchanted bay; high clouds hover upon the hill-tops; thin cataracts whiten lower down along the front of the hills; all the rest is precipitous forest, dark with the intensity of green, save where the palms shine silver in the thicket; it is indeed a place to enter with a song upon our lips.

". . . Fagaloa is the original spot where every prospect pleases. It was beautiful to see a vast black rain-squall engulf the bottom of the bay, pass over with glittering skirts, climb the opposite hill, and cling there and dwindle into rags of snowy cloud; beautiful too

was a scene where a little burn ran into the sea between groups of cocos and below a rustic bridge of palm-stems; something indescribably Japanese in the scene suggested the idea of setting on the bridge three gorgeously habited young girls, and these relieved in their bright raiment against the blue of the sky and the low sea-line completed the suggestion; it was a crape picture in the fact. We went on further to the end of the bay, where the village sits almost sprayed upon by waterfalls among its palm-grove, and round under the rocky promontory, by a broken path of rock among the bowers of foliage; a troop of little lads accompanied our progress, and two of them possessed themselves of my hands and trotted alongside of me with endless, incomprehensible conversation; both tried continually to pull the rings off my fingers; one carried my shoes and stockings, and proudly reminded me of the fact at every stoppage. They were unpleasant, cheeky, ugly urchins; and the shoe-bearer, when we turned the corner and sat down in the shade and the sea-breeze on black ledges of volcanic rock, splashed by the sea, nestled up to my side, and sat pawing me like an old acquaintance. . . .

"*Jan. 1st, 1890.*—On our way back along the most precipitous and seemingly desert portion of the coast, we were startled by a sudden noise rising above the continuous sound of the breaching surf which hangs along the shore incessant and invariable in pitch. At first we supposed it to be the sound of some greater wave exploding through a blow-hole of the rocks; but presently the sound was repeated, our eye was caught by a growing column of blue smoke arising in the

shore-side forest, and we were aware that in that bay, where not a roof appeared to break the continuous foliage, a not inconsiderable village must sit secret, whose inhabitants were now saluting the New Year with a field-piece, some relic of the war."

But Stevenson was now to take a step that proved more decisive than for the moment he imagined. The winter home he had once projected at Madeira was to be transferred to Samoa; he purchased some four hundred acres in the bush, two miles behind and six hundred feet above the level of the town of Apia. The ground was covered, not exactly with virgin forest, for it had formerly been occupied (according to tradition) by a Samoan bush town, but with vegetation so dense that on her first visit his wife had been quite unable to penetrate to the spot where the house afterwards stood. The land, however, was to be cleared, and a cottage erected, which would at any rate shelter the family during such intervals between their cruises as it should suit them to spend in Samoa. But the real reason for the selection of this island for a settlement lay principally in the facilities of communication. An author, and especially a writer of novels, can dispense with many of the blessings of civilisation; the one thing absolutely indispensable is a regular and trustworthy mode of communicating with his printer and his publisher. Now in the matter of mails Samoa was exceptionally fortunate. The monthly steamers between Sydney and San Francisco received and deposited their mail-bags in passing, and very soon after began to call at the port of Apia. A German steamer, the *Lübeck*, ran regularly between Apia and Sydney, and the New

Zealand boat, the *Richmond*, called on her circular trip from Auckland to Tahiti. Of all the other islands which Stevenson had visited, Tahiti itself was the only possible rival, but its mail service was much less frequent and less trustworthy; and, moreover, Stevenson was not anxious to place himself under the control of a French colonial government.

So the ground was bought, the money paid, and orders were left to begin the necessary operations. Early in February the party sailed for Sydney, where Mrs. Strong was now waiting to see them on their way home to England for the summer.

Soon after reaching Australia, Stevenson found in a religious paper a letter from Dr. Hyde, a Presbyterian minister in Honolulu, depreciating the labours of Father Damien at Molokai, and reviving against his memory some highly unchristian and unworthy slanders. The letter was written in a spirit peculiarly calculated to rouse Stevenson's indignation, and when he heard at the same time a report, which may or may not have been true, but which he, at any rate, fully believed, to the effect that a proposed memorial to Damien in London had been abandoned on account of this or some similar statement, his anger knew no bounds. He sat down and wrote the celebrated letter to Dr. Hyde, which was forthwith published in pamphlet form in Sydney, and subsequently in Edinburgh in the *Scots Observer*. He had the courage of his opinions, and realised the risks he was taking: "I knew I was writing a libel: I thought he would bring an action; I made sure I should be ruined; I asked leave of my gallant family, and the sense that I was signing away all I

possessed kept me up to high-water mark, and made me feel every insult heroic."

But in place of the news for which his friends were waiting, that he had started upon his homeward voyage, there came a telegram to Mr. Baxter on the 10th April: "Return Islands four months. Home September."

He had taken cold in Sydney, and after the lapse of eighteen months having again started a hemorrhage, was very ill and pining for the sea. Mrs. Stevenson heard of a trading steamer about to start for "the Islands," applied for three passages and was refused, went to the owners and was again refused, but stating inflexibly that it was a matter of life or death to her husband, she carried her point and extorted their unwilling consent.

This vessel was the steamship *Janet Nicoll*, an iron screw-steamer of about six hundred tons, chartered by Messrs. Henderson & Macfarlane, a well-known South Sea firm. There was a dock strike in Sydney at the time, but with a "black-boy" crew on board, the *Janet* got away, carrying a full complement of officers and engineers, and the trio to whom *Island Nights' Entertainments* was afterwards dedicated—Mr. Henderson, one of the partners; Ben Hird,[1] the supercargo; and "Jack" Buckland, the living original of Tommy Haddon in *The Wrecker*.

Unwelcome guests though they had been, no sooner had they started than they met with the greatest kind-

[1] In a brief sketch in *Macmillan's Magazine* for November, 1896, I endeavoured to do justice to the memory of some of Hird's many admirable qualities.

ness and cordiality from every one on board, and when they reached Auckland the invalid was himself again. They left that port under sealed orders, but were not yet clear of the lighthouse before some fireworks, left in Buckland's berth, set his cabin on fire. The saloon was filled with dense smoke and a rosy glow "Let no man say I am unscientific," wrote Stevenson. "When I ran, on the alert, out of my stateroom, and found the main cabin incarnadined with the glow of the last scene of a pantomime, I stopped dead. 'What is this?' said I. 'This ship is on fire, I see that; but why a pantomime?' And I stood and reasoned the point, until my head was so muddled with the fumes that I could not find the companion. By singular good fortune, we got the hose down in time and saved the ship, but Lloyd lost most of his clothes, and a great part of our photographs was destroyed. Fanny saw the native sailors tossing overboard a blazing trunk; she stopped them in time, and behold, it contained my manuscripts."[1]

After this episode all went well; the course of the steamer may be traced on the accompanying map. She put in to Apia, and stayed there long enough to enable the party to visit their new property and see what progress had been made. After that she went to the east and to the north, calling at three-and-thirty low islands; their stay in almost every case was limited to a few hours, and, as Stevenson wrote on this cruise, "hackney cabs have more variety than atolls." They saw their friend King Tembinok' again, and received a welcome from him almost too pathetic to be hearty.

[1] *Letters*, ii. 185.

He had been ill, and the whole island had been attacked by measles, a disaster which was apparently attributed by the victims to the sale of their "devil-box." In the centre of the big house was a circular piece of "devil-work" in the midst of a circle of white shells, and the worship of "Chench," the local deity, had obviously received an impetus from recent events.

The circumstances of this expedition were, of course, very different from their former leisurely and more local voyages in schooners. Stevenson greatly enjoyed the company on board, for two at least of his fellow-voyagers were probably unrivalled by any white man in their experience of these regions, and were possessed besides of remarkable ability and character.

The altered conditions of navigation were a great interest to him, and he was never weary of admiring the captain's skill in handling the steamer, one specimen of which he has recorded in the account of his first visit to a pearl-shell island, such as, to his great disappointment, he had failed to visit from Fakarava.

"Nearly two years had passed before I found myself in the trading steamer *Janet Nicoll*, heading for the entrance of Penrhyn or Tongarewa. In front, the line of the atoll showed like a narrow sea-wall of bare coral, where the surges broke; on either hand the tree-tops of an islet showed some way off: on one, the site of the chief village; the other, then empty, but now inhabited, and known by the ill-omened name of Molokai. We steamed through the pass and were instantly involved amidst a multiplicity of coral lumps, or horses' heads, as they are called by sailors. Through these our way meandered; we would have a horse's head athwart the

bows, one astern, one upon either board; and the tortuous fairway was at times not more than twice the vessel's beam. The *Janet* was, besides, an iron ship; half the width of the Pacific severed us from the next yard of reparation; one rough contact, and our voyage might be ended, and ourselves consigned to half a year of Penrhyn. On the topgallant forecastle stood a native pilot, used to conning smaller ships, and unprepared for the resources of a steamer; his cries rang now with agony, now with wrath. The best man was at the bridge wheel; and Captain Henry, with one hand on the engine signal, one trembling towards the steersman, juggled his long ship among these dangers, with the patient art of one fitting up a watch, with the swift decision of a general in the field. I stood by, thrilling at once with the excitement of a personal adventure and the admiration due to perfect skill.

"We were presently at anchor in a singular berth, boxed all about; our late entrance, our future exit not to be discovered; in front the lagoon, where I counted the next day upwards of thirty horses' heads in easy view; behind, the groves of the isle and the crowded houses of the village. Many boats lay there at moorings: in the verandah, folk were congregated gazing at the ship; children were swimming from the shore to board us; and from the lagoon, before a gallant breeze, other boats came skimming homeward. The boats were gay with white sails and bright paint; the men were clad in red and blue, they were garlanded with green leaves or gay with kerchiefs; and the busy, many-coloured scene was framed in the verdure of the palms and the opal of the shallow sea.

"It was a pretty picture, and its prettiest element, the coming of the children. Every here and there we saw a covey of black heads upon the water. . . . Soon they trooped up the side-ladder, a healthy, comely company of kilted children; and had soon taken post upon the after-hatch, where they sat in a double row, singing with solemn energy."

But on the whole Stevenson did not benefit greatly by the voyage. He now turned to the "letters" upon his experiences for the American syndicate; from the first they failed to satisfy him, although he regarded them, even in their final form, as only the rough material for the book. The heat of the steamer, driven before the wind, was often intolerable; he had another hemorrhage, and remained languid and unfit for work. On the return journey the *Janet* turned off to New Caledonia, and thence went direct to Sydney. Stevenson, however, landed at Noumea, where he spent a few days by himself, observing the French convict settlement, and learning something of the methods of dealing with natives. It was the only time he was ever among Melanesian tribes, although occasionally he met with isolated individuals, especially in Samoa, where they are frequently imported as labourers for the German firm.

He followed his wife and stepson to Sydney, whence Mr. Osbourne left for England, finally to arrange their affairs, and bring out the furniture from Skerryvore for the "yet unbuilt house on the mountain."

All idea of this journey had been given up by Stevenson himself in the course of the past voyage, and indeed, having reached Sydney, he was confined to his

room in the Union Club, and left it only to return to Samoa. From this time forth, although he formed various projects, never realised, of seeing his friends, and especially Mr. Colvin, in Egypt, Honolulu, or Ceylon, he never, so far as I know, again looked forward to setting foot upon his native shores.

With his wife he left for Apia, and on their arrival they camped in gipsy fashion in the four-roomed wooden house which was all, except a trellised arbour, that had yet been erected on the property. Here for the next six months they lived alone with one servant, until the ground was further cleared and the permanent house built.

Into the details of Stevenson's life at this time there is no need to go; it was a period of transition, and it is sufficiently described in the *Vailima Letters*. Most of his material difficulties were crowded into it; but even from them he derived a great deal of enjoyment. There were daily working on the land a number of labourers, partly Samoans, partly natives of other groups, superintended for most of the time by a Samoan who figures largely in the first part of the letters to Mr. Colvin. After a while, as soon as the lie of the ground could be more clearly seen, the site of the new house was selected on a plateau a couple of hundred yards higher up the hill, and the building itself was begun by white carpenters.

This was the only time their food-supply ever ran at all short; but after their experiences in schooners and on low islands, they found little to complain of, as they felt that if it ever came to the worst, two miles off there was always an open restaurant. Their one ser-

vant was a German ex-steward, a feckless, kindly creature, who seemed born with two left hands, but was always ready to do his best. But the less competent the servant, the more numerous and miscellaneous were the odd jobs which devolved upon his master and mistress.

Thus in the meantime Stevenson's own work went on under great disadvantages. Much of his effort was expended upon the South Sea Letters; but this was the time when he saw most of the virgin forest, and his solitary expeditions and the hours spent in weeding at the edge of the "bush" were, as we shall see, not without effect upon his writing.

In January, 1891, he left his wife in sole charge and went to Sydney to meet his mother, who was to arrive there from Scotland on her way to Samoa. The shaft of the *Lübeck* broke when she was near Fiji, at the worst of seasons and in the most dangerous of waters; but it was patched up with great skill, and, under sail and to the astonishment of the whole port, she arrived at her destination only four days late. Stevenson as usual "fell sharply sick in Sydney," but was able to go on board the *Lübeck* again and convoy his mother to her new home. The house, after all, was not ready to receive her, and, having taken her first brief glimpse of Samoa, she returned to the Colonies for another couple of months.

Stevenson then accompanied Mr. Harold Sewall, the American Consul-General, upon a visit to Tutuila, the easternmost island of the group, now added to the territory of the United States.

Here they spent three weeks, partly by the shores of

the great harbour of Pagopago, partly on an attempt to reach the islands of Manu'a in a small schooner, and partly in circumnavigating Tutuila by easy stages in a whale-boat. The expedition was rather at the mercy of its interpreter; but the island was new to them, and they all greatly enjoyed their experiences. It was the best view Stevenson ever had of the more remote Samoans in their own homes, and the scenery and the life attracted him more than ever. Fortunately he kept a diary, from which I have taken a few characteristic passages:—

"PAGOPAGO

"The island at its highest point is nearly severed in two by the long-elbowed harbour, about half a mile in width, cased everywhere in abrupt mountain-sides. The tongue of water sleeps in perfect quiet, and laps around its continent with the flapping wavelets of a lake. The wind passes overhead; day and night overhead the scroll of trade-wind clouds is unrolled across the sky, now in vast sculptured masses, now in a thin drift of débris, singular shapes of things, protracted and deformed beasts and trees and heads and torsos of old marbles, changing, fainting, and vanishing even as they flee. Below, meanwhile, the harbour lies unshaken and laps idly on its margin; its colour is green like a forest pool, bright in the shallows, dark in the midst with the reflected sides of woody mountains. At times a flicker of silver breaks the uniformity, miniature whitecaps flashing and disappearing on the sombre ground; to see it, you might think the wind was treading on and toeing the flat water, but not so

—the harbour lies unshaken, and the flickering is that of fishes.

"Right in the wind's eye, and right athwart the dawn, a conspicuous mountain stands, designed like an old fort or castle, with naked cliffy sides and a green head. In the peep of the day the mass is outlined dimly; as the east fires, the sharpness of the silhouette grows definite, and through all the chinks of the high wood the red looks through, like coals through a grate. From the other end of the harbour, and at the extreme of the bay, when the sun is down and night beginning, and colours and shapes at the sea-level are already confounded in the greyness of the dusk, the same peak retains for some time a tinge of phantom rose.

"Last night I was awakened before midnight by the ship-rats which infest the shores and invade the houses, incredible for numbers and boldness. I went to the water's edge; the moon was at the zenith; vast fleecy clouds were travelling overhead, their borders frayed and extended as usual in fantastic arms and promontories. The level of their flight is not really high, it only seems so; the trade-wind, although so strong in current, is but a shallow stream, and it is common to see, beyond and above its carry, other clouds faring on other and higher winds. As I looked, the skirt of a cloud touched upon the summit of Pioa, and seemed to hang and gather there, and darken as it hung. I knew the climate, fled to shelter, and was scarce laid down again upon the mat before the squall burst. In its decline, I heard the sound of a great bell rung at a distance; I did not think there had been a bell upon the island. I thought the hour a strange one for the ring-

ing, but I had no doubt it was being rung on the other side at the Catholic Mission, and lay there listening and thinking, and trying to remember which of the bells of Edinburgh sounded the same note. It stopped almost with the squall. Half an hour afterwards, another shower struck upon the house and spurted awhile from the gutters of the corrugated roof; and again with its decline the bell began to sound, and from the same distance. Then I laughed at myself, and this bell resolved into an eavesdrop falling on a tin close by my head. All night long the flaws continued at brief intervals. Morning came, and showed mists on all the mountain-tops, a grey and yellow dawn, a fresh accumulation of rain imminent on the summit of Pioa, and the whole harbour scene stripped of its tropic colouring and wearing the appearance of a Scottish loch.

"And not long after, as I was writing on this page, sure enough, from the far shore a bell began indeed to ring. It has but just ceased, boats have been passing the harbour in the showers, the congregation is within now, and the mass begun. How very different stories are told by that drum of tempered iron! To the natives a new, strange, outlandish thing: to us of Europe, redolent of home; in the ear of the priests, calling up memories of French and Flemish cities, and perhaps some carved cathedral and the pomp of celebrations; in mine, talking of the grey metropolis of the north, of a village on a stream, of vanished faces and silent tongues.

"The Bay of Oa

"We sailed a little before high-water, and came skirting for some while along a coast of classical landscapes,

cliffy promontories, long sandy coves divided by semi-independent islets, and the far-withdrawing sides of the mountain, rich with every shape and shade of verdure. Nothing lacked but temples and galleys; and our own long whale-boat sped (to the sound of song) by eight nude oarsmen figured a piece of antiquity better than perhaps we thought. No road leads along this coast; we scarce saw a house; these delectable islets lay quite desert, inviting seizure, and there was none like Keats's Endymion[1] to hear our snowlight cadences. On a sudden we began to open the bay of Oa. At the first sight my mind was made up—the bay of Oa was the place for me. We could not enter it, we were assured; and being entered we could not land; both statements plainly fictive; both easily resolved into the fact that there was no guest-house, and no girls to make the kava for our boatmen and admire their singing. A little gentle insistence produced a smiling acquiescence, and the eight oars began to urge us slowly into a bay of the *Æneid*. Right overhead a conical hill arises; its top is all sheer cliff of a rosy yellow, stained with orange and purple, bristled and ivied with individual climbing trees; lower down the woods are massed; lower again the rock crops out in a steep buttress, which divides the arc of beach. The boat was eased in, we landed and turned this way and that like fools in a perplexity of pleasures; now some way into the wood toward the spire, but the woods had soon strangled the path—in the Samoan phrase, the way was dead—and we began to flounder in impenetrable bush, still far from the foot of the ascent, although already

[1] Book II. l. 80.

the greater trees began to throw out arms dripping with lianas, and to accept us in the margin of their shadows. Now along the beach; it was grown upon with crooked, thick-leaved trees down to the water's edge. Immediately behind there had once been a clearing; it was all choked with the mummy-apple, which in this country springs up at once at the heels of the axeman, and among this were intermingled the coco-palm and the banana. Our landing and the bay itself had nearly turned my head. 'Here are the works of all the poets *passim*,' I said, and just then my companion stopped. 'Behold an omen,' said he, and pointed. It was a sight I had heard of before in the islands, but not seen: a little tree such as grows sometimes on infinitesimal islets on the reef, almost stripped of its leaves, and covered instead with feasting butterflies. These, as we drew near, arose and hovered in a cloud of lilac and silver-grey[1]. . . .

"All night the crickets sang with a clear trill of silver; all night the sea filled the hollow of the bay with varying utterance; now sounding continuous like a mill-weir, now (perhaps from further off) with swells and silences. I went wandering on the beach, when the tide was low. I went round the tree before our boys had stirred. It was the first clear grey of the morning; and I could see them lie, each in his place, enmeshed from head to foot in his unfolded kilt. The Highlander with his belted plaid, the Samoan with his lavalava, each sleep in their one vesture unfolded. One

[1] "Later on I found the scene repeated in another place; but here the butterflies were of a different species, glossy brown and black, with arabesques of white."

boy who slept in the open under the trees had made his pillow of a smouldering brand, doubtless for the convenience of a midnight cigarette; all night the flame had crept nearer, and as he lay there, wrapped like an oriental woman, and still plunged in sleep, the redness was within two handbreadths of his frizzled hair.

"I had scarce bathed, had scarce begun to enjoy the fineness and the precious colours of the morning, the golden glow along the edge of the high eastern woods, the clear light on the sugar-loaf of Maugalai, the woven blue and emerald of the cone, the chuckle of morning bird-song that filled the valley of the woods, when upon a sudden a draught of wind came from the leeward and the highlands of the isle, rain rattled on the tossing woods; the pride of the morning had come early, and from an unlooked-for side. I fled for refuge in the shed; but such of our boys as were awake stirred not in the least; they sat where they were, perched among the scattered boxes of our camp, and puffed at their stubborn cigarettes, and crouched a little in the slanting shower. So good a thing it is to wear few clothes. I, who was largely unclad—a pair of serge trousers, a singlet, woollen socks, and canvas shoes; think of it—envied them in their light array.

"*Thursday.*—The others withdrew to the next village. Meanwhile I had Virgil's bay all morning to myself, and feasted on solitude, and overhanging woods, and the retiring sea. The quiet was only broken by the hoarse cooing of wild pigeons up the valley, and certain inroads of capricious winds that found a way hence and thence down the hillside and set the palms clattering; my enjoyment only disturbed by clouds of

dull, voracious, spotted, and not particularly envenomed mosquitoes. When I was still, I kept Buhac powder burning by me on a stone under the shed, and read Livy, and confused to-day and two thousand years ago, and wondered in which of these epochs I was flourishing at that moment; and then I would stroll out, and see the rocks and the woods, and the arcs of beaches, curved like a whorl in a fair woman's ear, and huge ancient trees, jutting high overhead out of the hanging forest, and feel the place at least belonged to the age of fable, and awaited Æneas and his battered fleets.

"Showers fell often in the night; some sounding from far off like a cataract, some striking the house, but not a drop came in. . . . At night a cry of a wild cat-like creature in the bush. Far up on the hill one golden tree; they say it is a wild cocoanut: I know it is not, they must know so too; and this leaves me free to think it sprang from the gold bough of Proserpine.

"The morning was all in blue; the sea blue, blue inshore upon the shallows, only the blue was nameless; the horizon clouds a blue like a fine pale porcelain, the sky behind them a pale lemon faintly warmed with orange. Much that one sees in the tropics is in water-colours, but this was in water-colours by a young lady."

The mention of Livy recalls a curious circumstance, and raises besides the question of Stevenson's classical studies.

A year or two later he told me that he had read several books of Livy at this time, but found the style influencing him to such an extent that he resolved to read no more, just as in earlier days he had been driven

to abandon Carlyle. Mr. Gosse has recorded that Walter Pater in turn refused to read Stevenson lest the individuality of his own style might be affected, but it is more curious to find Stevenson himself at so late a stage fearing the influence of a Latin author.

As to his classics, he was ignorant of Greek, and preferred the baldest of Bohn's translations to more literary versions that might come between him and the originals. His whole relation to Latin, however, was very curious and interesting. He had never mastered the grammar of the language, and to the end made the most elementary mistakes. Nevertheless, he had a keen appreciation of the best authors, and, indeed, I am not sure that Virgil was not more to him than any other poet, ancient or modern. From all the qualities of the pedant he was, of course, entirely free. Just as he wrote Scots as well as he was able, "not caring if it hailed from Lauderdale or Angus, from the Mearns or Galloway," but if he had ever heard a good word, he "used it without shame," so it was with his Latin. Technicalities of law and the vocabulary of Ducange were admitted to equal rights with authors of the Golden Age.

Latin no doubt told for much in the dignity and concision of his style, and in itself it was to him—as we see in his diary—always a living language. But as an influence, Rome counted to him as something very much more than a literature—a whole system of law and empire.

From this expedition he returned to Apia in an open boat, a twenty-eight hours' voyage of sixty-five miles,

on which schooners have before now been lost. But for the journey and the exposure Stevenson was none the worse. "It is like a fairy-story that I should have recovered liberty and strength, and should go round again among my fellow-men, boating, riding, bathing, toiling hard with a wood-knife in the forest."

Before the end of the month the family were installed in the new house, and in May they were reinforced not only by the elder Mrs. Stevenson, but also by Mrs. Strong and her boy from Sydney, who thenceforward remained under Stevenson's protecting care.

His wanderings were now at an end, and he was to enter upon a period of settled residence. Stevenson has been generally regarded as a tourist and an outside observer in Samoa, especially by those who least know the Pacific themselves. There is, it must be admitted, only one way to gain a lifelong experience of any country, but to have lived nowhere else is conducive neither to breadth of view nor to wisdom. It must always be borne in mind that before Stevenson settled down for the last three and a half years of his life in his own house of Vailima, he had spent an almost equal length of time in visiting other islands in the Pacific. In fact, had he been deliberately preparing himself for the life he was to lead, he could hardly have pursued a wiser course, or undergone a more thorough training. On his travels he enjoyed exceptional opportunities of gathering information, and in general knowledge of the South Seas, and of Samoa in particular, he was probably at the time of his death rivalled by no more than two or three persons of anything like his education or intelligence.

CHAPTER XV

VAILIMA — 1891–94

"We thank Thee for this place in which we dwell; for the love that unites us; for the peace accorded us this day; for the hope with which we expect the morrow; for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies that make our lives delightful; for our friends in all parts of the earth, and our friendly helpers in this foreign isle. . . . Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind. Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies. Bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent endeavours. If it may not, give us the strength to encounter that which is to come, that we be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune, and down to the gates of death, loyal and loving one to another." — R. L. S., Vailima Prayers.

THE new house and the augmentation of his household marked the definite change in Stevenson's life, which now assumed the character that it preserved until the end. In private his material comfort was increased, and he was delivered from most of the interruptions to which his work had lately been subject; in public it now became manifest that he was to be a permanent resident in Samoa, enjoying all the advantages of wealth and fame, and the consideration conferred by numerous retainers.

To the world of his readers, and to many who never read his books, his position became one of extreme interest. He was now living, as the legend went, among the wildest of savages, who were clearly either always at war or circulating reports of wars immediately to come; settled in a house, the splendour and

luxury of which were much exaggerated by rumour; dwelling in a climate which was associated with all the glories of tropic scenery and vegetation, and also, in the minds of his countrymen at all events, with a tremendous cataclysm of the elements, from which the British navy had emerged with triumph. It was little wonder that, as Mr. Gosse wrote to him, "Since Byron was in Greece, nothing has appealed to the ordinary literary man so much as that you should be living in the South Seas."

It is clear that a mode of life so unusual for a man of letters not only absolves his biographer from the duty of withholding as far as possible the details of every-day existence, but even lays upon him the necessity of explaining various trivial matters, which, if they belonged to the life of cities or of states, it would be his first anxiety to suppress. It well may be that no author of eminence will ever again take up his abode in Samoa or even in the South Seas, but the problem of keeping in touch at the same time with man, with nature, and with the world of letters, is as far from its solution as from losing its general interest. And the most stolid of glances cannot fail to be arrested for a moment by the sight of a figure as chivalrous and romantic as Stevenson, living in a world so striking, so appropriate, and so picturesque.

To trace in detail the growth of the house or the development of the estate would be no less tedious than to follow closely the course of political intrigues or the appointment and departure of successive officials. I shall therefore abandon the temporal order, and briefly describe, in the first instance, the material environment

in which Stevenson lived, his house, and the surrounding country, his mode of life, his friends and visitors, his work, and his amusements. It will then be necessary to mention very briefly his political relations before passing on to the record of his writings during this period.

The island of Upolu, on which he lived, was the central and most important of the three principal islands composing the group to which the collective name of Samoa is applied. It is some five-and-forty miles in length and about eleven in average breadth. The interior is densely wooded, and a central range of hills runs from east to west. Apia, the chief town, is situated about the centre of the north coast, and it was on the hills about three miles inland that Stevenson made his home.

The house and clearing lay on the western edge of a tongue of land several hundred yards in width, situated between two streams, from the westernmost of which the steep side of Vaea Mountain, covered with forest, rises to a height of thirteen hundred feet above the sea. On the east, beyond Stevenson's boundary, the ground fell away rapidly into the deep valley of the Vaisigano, the principal river of the island. On the other hand, the western stream, formed by the junction of several smaller watercourses above, ran within Stevenson's own ground, and, not far below the house, plunged over a barrier of rock with a fall of about twelve feet into a delightful pool, just deep enough for bathing and arched over with orange-trees. A few hundred yards lower down it crossed his line with an abrupt plunge of forty or fifty feet. It was from this stream and its

four chief tributaries that Stevenson gave to the property the Samoan name of Vailima, or Five Waters.

The place itself lay, as has been said, some three miles from the coast, and nearly six hundred feet above sea-level. From the town a good carriage-road, a mile in length, led to the native village of Tanugamanono, where the Stevensons had lodged upon their first arrival. Beyond that point there was for a time nothing but the roughest of footpaths, which led across the hills to the other side of the island through a forest region wholly uninhabited, all the native villages being either by the sea or within a short distance of the coast.

The track to Vailima was made over and over again by Stevenson, occasionally in concert with some of the owners of the lower lands, until it gradually assumed the appearance of a road, and could be traversed in dry weather by wagons or even by a buggy. But to the last the carrying for the house was done by the two big New Zealand pack-horses. East, and west, and south of the clearing the land was covered with thick bush, containing many scattered lofty forest trees like those judiciously spared by the axemen where they did not endanger the new house. Here and there in the forest was a great banyan with branching roots, covering many square yards of surface, and affording a resting-place for the flying-foxes, the great fruit-eating bats, which sally forth at dusk with a slow, heavy flight, like a straggling company of rooks making for the coast. Even to the north, although most of the ground between Vailima and Apia had to some extent been cultivated, along the "road" the trees grew close

and high, and on a dark night the phosphorescence gleamed on fallen logs amid the undergrowth, twinkling and flickering to and fro, like the hasty footsteps of the witches the Samoans believed it to be. On the estate itself the route lay by the lane of limes, a rugged, narrow, winding path, that seemed, as Stevenson said, "almost as if it was leading to Lyonesse, and you might see the head and shoulders of a giant looking in."[1] But this part of the track was afterwards cut off by the Ala Loto Alofa, the Road of the Loving Heart, built by the Mataafa chiefs in return for Tusitala's kindness to them in prison. It was a broader and more level way, also leading past a fragrant lime-hedge, and having as the centre of its view for any one journeying to Vailima the wooded crest of Vaea.

The house of Vailima was built of wood throughout, painted a dark green outside, with a red roof of corrugated iron, on which the heavy rain sounded like thunder as it fell and ran off to be stored for household purposes in the large iron tanks. The building finally consisted of two blocks of equal size, placed, if I may use a military phrase in this connection, in échelon. It was the great defect of the house in its master's eyes that from a strategical point of view it was not defensible, but fortunately there was never an occasion during his lifetime when it would have been desirable to place it in a state of siege. It fulfilled many of the requirements both of structure and more especially of position which he had laid down for his ideal house.[2]

After December, 1892, the downstairs accommodation consisted of three rooms, a bath, a storeroom and

[1] *Vailima Letters*, p. 258. [2] *Miscellanea*, p. 42.

cellars below, with five bedrooms and the library upstairs. On the ground-floor, a verandah, twelve feet deep, ran in front of the whole house and along one side of it. Originally there had been a similar gallery above in front of the library, but it so darkened that room as to make it almost useless for working. Stevenson then had half of the open space boarded in, and used it as his own bedroom and study, the remainder of the verandah being sheltered, when necessary, by Chinese blinds. The new room was thus a sort of martin's nest, plastered as it were upon the outside of the house; but except for being somewhat hot in the middle of the day, it served its purpose to perfection. A small bedstead, a couple of bookcases, a plain deal kitchen table and two chairs were all its furniture, and two or three favourite Piranesi etchings and some illustrations of Stevenson's own works hung upon the walls. At one side was a locked rack containing half-a-dozen Colt's rifles for the service of the family in case they should ever be required. One door opened into the library, the other into the verandah; one window, having from its elevation the best view the house afforded, looked across the lawns and pasture, over the tree-tops, out to the sapphire sea, while the other was faced by the abrupt slope of Vaea. The library was lined with books, the covers of which had all been varnished to protect them from the climate. The most important divisions were the shelves allotted to the history of Scotland, to French books either modern or relating to the fifteenth century, to military history, and to books relating to the Pacific.

At this height the beat of the surf was plainly to be heard, but soothing to the ear and far away; other

noises there were none but the occasional note of a bird, a cry from the boys at work, or the crash of a falling tree. The sound of wheels or the din of machinery was hardly known in the island: about the house all went barefoot, and scarcely in the world could there be found among the dwellings of men a deeper silence than in Stevenson's house in the forest.

The chief feature within was the large hall that occupied the whole of the ground-floor of the newer portion of the house—a room about sixty feet long and perhaps forty wide, lined and ceiled with varnished redwood from California. Here the marble bust of old Robert Stevenson twinkled with approval upon many a curiously combined company, while a couple of Burmese gilded idols guarded the two posts of the big staircase leading directly from the room to the upper floor. An old Samoan chief, being one day at his own request shown over the house, and having seen many marvels of civilisation of which he had never dreamed, showed no sign of interest, far less of amazement, but as he was departing he looked over his shoulder at the two Buddhas and asked indifferently: "Are they alive?" In one corner was built a large safe, which, being continually replenished from Apia, rarely contained any large amount of money at a time, but was supposed by the natives to be the prison of the Bottle Imp, the source of all Stevenson's fortune. In this room hung Mr. Sargent's portrait of Stevenson and his wife, Sir George Reid's portrait of Thomas Stevenson, two reputed Hogarths which the old gentleman had picked up, two or three of R. A. M. Stevenson's best works, a picture of horses by Mr. Arthur Lemon, and—greatly

to the scandal of native visitors — a plaster group by Rodin.

In front of the house lay a smooth green lawn of couch-grass, used for tennis or croquet, and bounded on two sides by a hibiscus-hedge which, within a few months of its planting, was already six feet high and a mass of scarlet double blossoms — the favourite flowers of the Samoan.

Immediately behind the mansion lay the wooden kitchen and a native house for the cook. A hundred yards to one side the original cottage in which Stevenson first lived had been re-erected, to serve upstairs as bedrooms for Mr. Osbourne and myself, downstairs for the house-boys,[1] for stores, tool-house, and harness-room.

Upon the other side another native house lay, halfway towards the stream. The ground below the home fence was all used for pasture; in front, the milking-shed occupied the site of the old house; and the pig-pen, impregnably fenced with barbed wire, lay a couple of hundred yards in the rear. At the back also were the old disused stables, for in later days the horses were always kept out at grass in the various paddocks, coming up for their feed of corn every morning and evening.

But even when the house itself was provided, its service was the great difficulty. Competent and willing white helpers were not to be procured, and though there were many natives employed in Apia, yet Samoa, less fortunate than India, possessed no class of natives

[1] In Samoa, as in many other lands, native servants of all ages are known in English as "boys."

ready to minister to a white master with skill and devotion for a trifling wage.

At first Stevenson tried European and colonial servants. Two German men cooks passed through his kitchen: a Sydney lady's-maid brought dissensions into the household: a white overseer and three white carters came and left, causing various degrees of dissatisfaction. Then Mrs. Stevenson went away for a change to Fiji; in her absence the family made a clean sweep of the establishment, and Mrs. Strong and her brother took the entire charge of the kitchen into their own hands with complete success. This was of necessity a passing expedient. One day, however, Mr. Osbourne found a Samoan lad, with a hibiscus flower behind his ear, sitting on an empty packing-case beside the cook-house. He had come, it seemed, to collect half a dollar which the native overseer owed him, and he was quite content to wait for several hours until his debtor should return. In the meantime he was brought into the kitchen, and then and there initiated into the secrets of the white man's cookery. He was amused, interested, fascinated, and he plunged enthusiastically into the mysteries of his future profession. Fortunately in Samoa cookery was regarded as an art worthy of men's hands, and was practised even by high chiefs. The newcomer showed great aptitude; Mr. Osbourne persuaded him to stay, sent for his chest, and for several days would hardly let him out of his sight. So from that time forth Ta'alolo was head cook of Vailima, soon having a "boy" under him as scullion, taking only a few occasional holidays, and perfecting his art by visits to the kitchen of the French priests. In time he brought into the

household several of his relations, who were Catholics like himself, and proved the best and most trustworthy of all the boys.

A very few days after my first arrival one of these newcomers appeared in the character of assistant table-boy, a clumsy, half-developed, rather rustic youth, who of course knew no English, a sign that he was at any rate free from the tricks of the Apia-bred rascal. At the first, Sosimo seemed unlikely material, but there was a certain seriousness and resolution about him which quickly produced their effect. He soon became known as "The Butler," and before long was promoted to be head boy in the pantry. From the beginning he attached himself to Tusitala with a whole-hearted allegiance. He waited on him hand and foot, looked scrupulously after his clothes, devoted special attention to his pony "Jack," and made one of the most trustworthy and efficient servants I have ever known. When the end came, few if any showed as much feeling as Sosimo, and his loyalty to his master's memory lasted to the end of his own life.

These two men were the best, but as I write, I recall Leuelu, and Mitaele, and Iopu, and old Lafaele, and many more, not all such good servants, not all so loyal or so honest as those first named, but all with many solid merits, many pleasing traits, and a genuine personal devotion to Tusitala which pleased him as much as many more brilliant qualities.

The table was fully provided with white napery and silver and glass according to the usual English custom, as it had prevailed in the house of Stevenson's father. The cookery was eclectic and comprised such English

and American dishes as could be obtained or imitated, together with any native food which was found palatable. Of the supplies I shall speak later: it was the contrast between table and servants that was most striking. Nothing could have been more picturesque than to sit at an ordinary modern dinner-table and be waited on skilfully by a noble barbarian with perfect dignity and grace of carriage and manners hardly to be surpassed, who yet, if the weather were warm and the occasion ordinary, had for all his clothing a sheet of calico, in which his tattooed waist and loins alone were draped.

The actual house-servants were usually about half a dozen in number, two in the kitchen, two or three for house and table service; one, Mrs. Stevenson's special boy, for the garden and her own general service, and one more to take charge of the cows and pigs. Besides these, there was always a band of outside labourers under a native overseer supervised by Mr. Osbourne, working on the plantation, varying in number, according to the amount of clearing in hand, from half-a-dozen to twenty or thirty men. The signal for beginning and leaving off their work was always given by blowing the *pu*, a large conch-shell,[1] that made a great booming sound that could be heard in the farthest recesses of the plantation.

The great fear of the householder in Samoa used to be the dread of war, lest he should wake one morning and find that all his servants had been ordered out on service by their respective chiefs. By Stevenson's intervention the Vailima household staff was generally kept

[1] *Triton variegatus.*

at home, but the plantation was several times deserted and had to await the restoration of peace.

The government of the household was as far as possible on the clan system. "It is something of your own doing," Stevenson had written to his mother from Bournemouth in 1886, "if I take a somewhat feudal view of our relation to servants. . . . The Nemesis of the bourgeois who has chosen to shut out his servants — his 'family' in the old Scotch sense — from all intimacy and share in the pleasures of the house, attends us at every turn. An impossible relation is created, and brings confusion to all."[1]

If this were his attitude among the artificial conditions of England, he was not likely to adopt a more modern position in Samoa, where the patriarchal stage of society still prevailed. Accordingly from the first he used all opportunities to consolidate the household as a family, in which the boys should take as much pride and feel as much common interest as possible. His ideal was to maintain the relation of a Highland chief to his clan, such as it existed before the '45, since this seemed to approach most nearly to the actual state of things in Samoa at the time, and best met the difficulties which beset the relations of master and servant in his own day. He adopted a tartan for the Vailima kilt, to be worn on high days and holidays; he encouraged the boys to seek his help and advice on all matters, and was especially delighted when they preferred to him such requests as to grant his permission to a marriage.

It must not, however, be supposed that they were allowed their own way, or indulged when they mis-

[1] Cf. *Letters*, ii. 21.

behaved themselves. On such occasions the whole household would be summoned, a sort of "bed of justice" would be held, and sharp reprimands and fines inflicted.

Even with all these servants, the white man was separated from the material crises of life by a somewhat thin barrier, for even the best and most responsible natives were at times brought face to face with emergencies beyond their powers, and had to fall back upon their master's help. Such occasions of course befell Stevenson most frequently in the early days when he was living in the cottage with his wife and the white cook. Much of his time was then taken up unexpectedly in such pieces of business as may be found in the first pages of the *Vailima Letters:* in measuring land, rubbing down foundered cart-horses, ejecting stray horses during the night or wandering pigs during the day, or even in little household tasks which no one else was available to discharge. In later days his wife and all the family were able jealously to prevent such encroachments on his time, but during the last two years I can remember the master of the house himself helping with delight to feed a refractory calf that refused the bottle, driving out an angry bull, or doctoring stray natives suffering from acute colic or wounded feet, to say nothing of chance hours spent in planting or in weeding the cacao.

One morning's work stands out conspicuously in my memory. A hogshead of claret had, after many misadventures, arrived from Bordeaux slightly broached, so that it had to be bottled immediately. Stevenson feared the effect of the fumes even of the light wine upon the

natives, so he himself with our aid undertook the work. The boys were sent off to the stream with relays of bottles to wash while we tapped the cask, and the red wine flowed all the morning into jugs and basins beneath. It was poured away into the bottles, and they were corked and dipped into a large pot of green sealing-wax kept simmering on the kitchen fire. There seemed not to be any fumes to affect us, but the anticipation, and the pressure to get done, the novelty of the work, and, above all, Stevenson's contagious enthusiasm, produced a great feeling of delight and exhilaration, and made a regular vintage festival of the day. Stevenson was in his glory, as he always was when he felt that he was doing a manual task, and, above all, when he was able to work in concert with others, and give his love of camaraderie full scope.

And throughout his life, for Stevenson to throw himself into any employment which could kindle his imagination was to see him transfigured. The little boy who told himself stories about his football[1] came to weed in Samoa, and was there ever such an account of weeding since the world began? He drove stray horses to the pound, and it became a Border foray. He held an inquiry into the theft of a pig, and he bore himself as if he were the Lord President in the Inner House. But on the memorable day when we scampered through the outposts of Mataafa's troops, and for the first time in his life Louis saw armed men actually taking the field, even his own words hardly serve to express his exhilaration and outburst of spirit: "So home a little before six, in a dashing squall of rain, to a bowl of kava

[1] See vol. i. p. 66.

and dinner. But the impression on our minds was extraordinary; the sight of that picket at the ford, and those ardent, happy faces, whirls in my head; the old aboriginal awoke in both of us and nickered like a stallion. . . . War is a huge *entraînement;* there is no other temptation to be compared to it, not one. We were all wet, we had been about five hours in the saddle, mostly riding hard; and we came home like schoolboys, with such a lightness of spirits, and I am sure such a brightness of eye, as you could have lit a candle at."[1]

When any special entertainment was to be given, a dinner-party or a large luncheon, the whole family of course set to work to see that everything was properly done. Some saw to the decoration of the table or the polishing of the silver, or the blending of the preliminary "cocktail"; Stevenson loved to devote himself to the special cleaning of what he called in the Scots phrase "the crystal," and his use of the glass-cloth on decanter and wine-glasses would have rejoiced the heart of an expert.

Nor were there wanting occasions in which prompt action or careful and skilled investigation was needed. On two successive nights the house was nearly set on fire by a defective oil lantern, and only boxes of earth saved it; and at another time the dishonest use of red lead upon the roof turned all the rain-tanks into so many poisoned wells, and disabled the whole party for several weeks.

As for the food, when there was a large household to be supplied and a daily delivery from Apia had been

[1] *Vailima Letters*, June 28th, 1893.

arranged, there was no great difficulty in catering, apart from the expense. The meat came from the butcher, and the bread from the baker, the groceries, if needed, from the grocer, and the washing from the washerwoman, as in less romantic communities. There was a large storeroom, plentifully supplied from the Colonies and from home. There were generally three or four cows in milk, and a supply of pigs and chickens being reared for the table. The herd of wild cattle sold with the estate certainly did not exist within many miles of its boundaries, though I believe that the animals were not mythical, but led a real existence in another part of the island, whither they had betaken themselves. But if there were no four-footed creatures, birds were plentiful. Large pigeons were brought in from the surrounding woods, especially at the season when they had been feeding on the wild nutmeg-trees. The only game to be obtained was an occasional mallard, a rail, or a gallinule, unless the *manume'a* be reckoned, the one surviving species of dodo, a bird about the size of a small moor-hen, which has only recovered its present feeble powers of flight since cats were introduced into the island. I have found it in the woods above Vailima, but we never shot it ourselves, and its dark flesh was as rare upon the table as it was delicious. Fresh-water prawns came from the stream, and now and again some sea-fish might be sent up from the coast, where it was abundant. Vegetables were hardly to be bought, but a piece of swampy ground half a mile from the house was turned into a patch for taro, the finest of all substitutes for the potato. Bananas and breadfruit-trees were planted, and Mrs. Stevenson developed under

her own supervision a garden in which all sorts of new plants were tried, and most of them successfully adopted. Cocoanuts, oranges, guavas, and mangoes grew already on the estate or in a paddock just below, which was taken on lease; and many more of the most improved kinds of these trees were planted and throve. The common hedges on the estate were composed of limes, the fruit being so abundant that it was used to scour the kitchen floors and tables, and citrons were so common that they rotted on the trees. Several acres were planted with pineapples, which, after only a little cultivation, equalled the best varieties of their kind. There was also an unrivalled plantation of kava, the shrub whose powdered root yields the Samoan national drink. Wherever the ground was cleared, the papaw or mummy-apple at once sprang up and bore its wholesome and insipid fruit. Cape gooseberries were mere weeds; soursops, sweet potatoes and avocado pears, lemons and plums, egg-plants and the large granadillas all did well in that rich volcanic soil and that marvellous climate. Nothing failed of tropical products except the ambrosial mangosteen, the capricious child of the Malay Peninsula. The cacao, of which frequent mention is made in the *Vailima Letters*, grew and came into bearing; but the irregular and rocky surface of the ground made it difficult to keep clean, and also caused the plantation to be very straggling and irregular.

But, in truth, if Stevenson were unfitted for a South Sea trader, he was even less likely to be the successful manager of a plantation run for his own profit. No Samoan had either need or desire to work regularly for any sum less than seven dollars a month and his food,

but these wages and the amount of work rendered for them were quite incompatible with the idea of competition in the markets of the civilised world. Stevenson fed his men, paid them regularly in cash and not in trade, and neither worked them in bad weather nor discharged them for sickness, if he thought it was brought on by exposure in the course of doing work for him. If all this be accounted only common fair dealing, he had besides an unusual measure of that generosity he has attributed to others, "such as is possible to those who practise an art, never to those who drive a trade." At any rate, the plantation never paid its way, and never seriously promised to become self-supporting.

The temperature was generally between 85° and 90° Fahrenheit at noon, and always fell during the darkness to 70°, or less. I have never seen it at any time lower than 62° or higher than 95° in the shade. But in the early morning the lower temperature strikes one by contrast as bitterly cold, and so acutely had Stevenson felt it in his cottage in the bush that two large fireplaces with a brick chimney were built in the big house, though after a while they were seldom or never used. It was the contrast that was trying, even at higher temperatures. "The thermometer is only 80°," wrote Stevenson, "and it 's as cold as charity here. *You* would think it warm. What makes these differences? Eighty degrees is a common temperature with us, and usually pleasant. And to-day it pricks like a half frost in a wet November." Through the dry season from April to October a fresh trade-wind blew during the day from the south-east, and during the other months,

although heavy rain was more frequent, the fine days were beyond words delightful. "The morning is, ah! such a morning as you have never seen; heaven upon earth for sweetness, freshness, depth upon depth of unimaginable colour, and a huge silence broken at this moment only by the far-away murmur of the Pacific and the rich piping of a single bird."[1]

The rainfall is said to average about one hundred and thirty inches during the year, but as five or six inches fall during a really wet twenty-four hours, it does not argue many wet days, and, moreover, showers fall freely during the so-called dry season. The climate, of course, is not bracing, but it is probably as little debilitating as that of any place lying in the same latitude and no further removed from the sea-level.

There is a total absence of tropical and malarial fevers, which must be due to the fact that the germ-bearing mosquito either does not exist, or finds no virus to convey.[2] And this is the more remarkable because in the western limits of the Pacific the fevers of New Guinea and New Britain are the deadliest of their kind.

Samoa, in common with the rest of Polynesia, is fortunate in this also, that it contains nothing more venomous than a few centipedes, and even these have been accidentally imported with merchandise.

Stevenson's ordinary manner of life was this: He would get up at six, or perhaps earlier, and begin work.

[1] *Vailima Letters*, p. 243.

[2] If it be the latter reason, it is a strong argument against "labour-traffic" importing Melanesians impregnated with this poison into districts where the inhabitants are healthy.

From my bed in the cottage I commanded a view of his verandah, and often and often I have waked in the chill early dawn to see through the window the house with the mass of Vaea towering behind it: in the midst there would be the one spot of bright light where Tusitala, the only other person awake of all the household, was already at his labours. Down below, the monotonous beating of the surf could be heard; above, through the chill air, there rang the repeated call of the *manu-iao*, "the bird of dawn"[1] — a succession of clear phrases recalling with a difference the notes at once of the thrush and of the blackbird. The sky brightened; the lamp was extinguished; the household began to stir; and about half-past six a light breakfast was taken to the master. He continued to work by himself, chiefly making notes, until Mrs. Strong, her housekeeping finished, was able to begin his writing, generally soon after eight. Then they worked till nearly noon, when the whole household met for the first time at a substantial meal of two or three courses in the large hall.

Afterwards there would be talk, or reading aloud, or a game of piquet; a bowl of kava was always made early in the afternoon, and, having been served once, was then left in the verandah. When Austin Strong was at Vailima, his "Uncle Louis" would at some time during the day give him a history lesson, and also began to teach him French; for the boy's education was undertaken by the household at large. Later in the afternoon there might follow a visit to Apia, or a ride, or a stroll into the woods or about the plantation, or a game of croquet or tennis, until close upon six o'clock,

[1] *Ptilotis carunculata*, the wattled creeper.

when the dinner was served. Then followed a round game at cards, or reading, or talk as before, or music, if there were any visitor in the house able to play the piano or sing, for in the end Stevenson had altogether given up the practice of his flute. Soon after eight on an ordinary night the members of the household had generally dispersed to their rooms, to go to bed at what hour they chose. The master of the house used, I think, to do most of his reading at these times, but usually he was in bed soon after ten, if not actually before.

His own favourite exercise was riding, and though for the dozen years before he came to the Pacific he had probably never mounted a horse, he was an excellent rider. His light weight (I doubt if he ever actually weighed eight stone) served him in good stead, and Jack, the Samoan-bred pony which he bought in 1890, carried him well. The first and unflattering mention describes Jack as "a *very* plain animal, dark brown, but a good goer, and gentle, except for a habit of shying and sitting down on his tail, if he sees a basket in the road, or even a bunch of bananas. However, he will make a very good makeshift." He reigned alone in Stevenson's affection, and, never having been mounted since, is passing a peaceful old age in a friend's paddock in Upolu.

Except on the roads of the Neutral Territory and in the big German plantation, the ground was not very suitable for horses, and a dozen miles was usually the limit of an afternoon's excursion.

I have called this the ordinary mode of life, but it was subject to endless variations. If Stevenson were in a

hot fit of work with a story just begun or some new episode just introduced, he could do nothing and think of nothing else, and toiled all day long; for if there were no interruptions and no other pressing business, he would at such times return to his labours for all the afternoon and evening. On the other hand, if he were ailing or disinclined for writing, he would stop work some time before luncheon. But almost at any time he was at the mercy of visitors, white or brown, and the matters which were referred to him for advice or settlement were endless. Mr. Osbourne has well described them:—

"He was consulted on every imaginable subject: . . . Government chiefs and rebels consulted him with regard to policy; political letters were brought to him to read and criticise; his native following was so widely divided in party that he was often kept better informed on current events than any one person in the country. Old gentlemen would arrive in stately procession with squealing pigs for the 'chief-house of wisdom,' and would beg advice on the capitation tax or some such subject of the hour; an armed party would come from across the island with gifts, and a request that Tusitala would take charge of the funds of the village and buy the roof-iron for a proposed church. Parties would come to hear the latest news of the proposed disarming of the country, or to arrange a private audience with one of the officials; and poor war-worn chieftains, whose only anxiety was to join the winning side, and who wished to consult with Tusitala as to which that might be. Mr. Stevenson would sigh sometimes as he saw these stately folk crossing the lawn in single file, their

attendants following behind with presents and baskets, but he never failed to meet or hear them." [1]

During his mother's first period of residence at Vailima, Stevenson used every morning at eight to have prayers at which the whole household were present. A hymn was sung in Samoan from the Mission book, a chapter read verse by verse in English, and two or three prayers were read in English, ending with the Lord's Prayer in Samoan. But it was impossible to assemble before anybody had begun work, and so much delay was caused by summoning the household from their various labours, that the practice was reserved in the end for Sunday evenings only, when a chapter of the Samoan Bible was read, Samoan hymns were sung, and a prayer, written by Stevenson himself for the purpose, was offered in English, concluding, as always, with the native version of the Lord's Prayer. [2]

There is one feature in Stevenson's residence in Samoa which has probably never yet been mentioned, and that is the constancy with which he stayed at home in Vailima. After his visit to Tutuila in 1891 I know of only two occasions during his life in Upolu — the two separate nights which he passed at Malie — when he did not sleep either at Apia or in his own house. This was largely a precaution for the sake of health, since there was little good accommodation outside those two places, but it entirely prevented his becoming personally acquainted with many interesting spots in the islands and many of the Samoans whom he would have been glad to meet.

[1] *Scribner's Magazine*, p. 462, October, 1895.

[2] Appendix C, Vailima Prayers, vol. ii. p. 232.

Thus he never crossed the central range of his own island, the track over which passed near his house; he never visited Lanuto'o, the crater lake, set in the midst of the forest among the hills, only a dozen miles away, or the stone circle known as "The House of the Cuttle-fish" in a neighbouring glen, the crater islet of Apolima, or (to cut short my list) even any of the lovely villages along the south-western shore.

Now and again, for some special reason, generally connected with the arrival of the mail-steamer, he would sleep in Apia, but on all ordinary occasions he preferred to return home. At these times he liked the lamps left burning in his absence, that he might ride up the dark road and out into the solitary and silent woods, there to find the house lighted up to welcome his return even at the dead of night.

At Vailima visitors were always coming and going. All white residents who chose to appear were made welcome. The American Chief-Justice Ide and his family; Herr Schmidt, the President; the Consuls; the Land Commissioners, especially his friend Bazett Haggard; the Independent and Wesleyan missionaries; the French Bishop, the priests and sisters; the doctor, the magistrate, the postmaster, the surveyor; the managers of firms and their employés, English or German; and traders from all parts of the islands: such were some of the residents who might arrive at any time. To them might be added passing visitors, spending a week or two in Samoa between two steamers, or remaining several months to see the islands more thoroughly. The latter, if not actually staying in the house, were yet sure to be frequently invited to Vailima. Mr. Barrie

and Mr. Kipling, to their own bitter regret, too long deferred the visits for which their host was so eager; but of those who came, the Countess of Jersey, Mr. La Farge the artist, and Mr. Henry Adams the historian are the most familiar names.

And perhaps most frequent and certainly not least welcome were the officers and men of the warships, of which Apia saw only too many for her peace in those troubled days. The Germans toiled but seldom up the hill, the American vessels came rarely to the islands; but in the four years of Stevenson's residence at least eight British men-of-war entered the harbour, and one — his favourite *Curaçoa* — not only came most frequently, but stayed the longest, spending in the group seven out of the last eight months of his life. The experience which I think gave him more pleasure than any other in that time was his visit as a guest in the *Curaçoa* to the outlying islets of Manu'a, which he had in vain tried to reach three years before with Mr. Sewall.

In wardroom and gunroom were, of course, closer friends than others, but I think there was not an officer in the ship, from the captain to the youngest midshipman, who was not definitely a friend. The most intimate were perhaps Dr. Hoskyns, Hugo Worthington, the marine officer, Lieutenant (now Commander) Eeles; but the road from Apia became known as the "Curaçoa track," and if any one of the officers was placed upon the sick-list, he was speedily invited to stay in the house and try the effect of the climate of Vailima. With the men also, petty officers, bluejackets, and marines, Stevenson's relations were of the happiest.

"A most interesting lot of men," he wrote of another ship; "this education of boys for the navy is making a class, wholly apart—how shall I call them?—a kind of lower-class public-school boy, well-mannered, fairly intelligent, sentimental as a sailor."

He had doubted at Honolulu if the navies of the world held such another ship as the *Cormorant,* and the answer came to his door.

There was also the merchant service: the captains and officers of the mail-steamers, both of the San Francisco vessels and the local New Zealand boats. "Captain Smith of the *Taviuni,*" as Mr. Osbourne reminds me, "once paid a visit to Vailima with some friends. On his road home he passed the Ala Loto Alofa, on which the chiefs were then working like good fellows. He asked — and was told — the reason of their task; and the bluff, hearty old seaman at once insisted in getting off his horse and felling one of the trees himself. '*I* must be in that, too,' he said, with a genuine emotion; and spent half an hour swinging an axe."

Other and stranger visitors would turn up from the various islands which the family had visited. As Stevenson wrote to Mr. Barrie: "Another thing you must be prepared for — and that is the arrival of strange old shell-back guests out of every quarter of the island world, their mouths full of oaths for which they will punctiliously apologise; their clothes unmistakably purchased in a trade-room, each probably followed by a dusky bride. These you are to expect to see hailed with acclamation and dragged in as though they were dukes and duchesses. For though we may be out of

touch with 'God knows what,' we are determined to keep in touch with appearances and the Marquesas."

The bust of old Robert Stevenson, looking down upon the hall, must have been reminded again and again of the breakfasts in Baxter's Place, and his "broad-spoken, home-spun officers."[1]

The departure of one of these old traders was most characteristic, and would hardly, I think, occur in just the same way outside the South Seas. He had come from his island; he had made his way to Vailima and renewed his friendship; he had enjoyed himself and received such kindness and consideration as perhaps he did not often get. When he rose to take his leave, "Now don't you move," he said, "don't one of you move. Just let me take a last look of you all sitting there on that verandah, and I shall have that always to think of, when I 'm away."

It was Stevenson's intimate knowledge of this class which made him particularly anxious to heal as far as possible the unnecessary division between them and the missionaries. On this point he particularly insisted in an address delivered in Sydney in 1893.[2] That paper does not relate exclusively to Samoa; on the contrary, there is much of it which was applicable only elsewhere; but it is the general conclusion of Stevenson's experiences of British Protestant missions in the Pacific, and one of the wisest and most valuable utterances upon the whole subject.[3]

His personal relations with the Protestant missionaries in Samoa were most pleasant. He was a loyal and

[1] *Vide* vol. i. p. 10. [2] Appendix B.
[3] Compare especially *Letters*, ii. 340.

generous friend to every man and woman among them, told them quite plainly whenever he disagreed with them or disapproved of their line of conduct, and was a most stimulating and liberal influence on their work. It is almost invidious to single out names, but the Rev. W. E. Clarke and his wife were his closest and most thorough-going friends among the residents. Outside Samoa, the Rev. George Brown, the Rev. F. E. Lawes of Savage Island, and the Rev. F. Damon of Honolulu held high places in his affection and regard; but for Mr. Chalmers,[1] "Tamate" of New Guinea, he felt a kind of hero-worship, a greater admiration probably than he felt for any man of modern times except Charles Gordon.

His appreciation of the Mission he showed not only by giving his influence and his money, but also by offering his services to take a Bible-class of young half-caste lads on Sunday afternoons. Nothing was more irksome to him than a periodical engagement. The boys, it is gathered, were quite impenetrable, and the process was that of cutting blocks with a razor; but for several months Stevenson held firmly to his undertaking, and in the end it was dropped only from some urgent external cause, and never resumed.

With the Catholics Stevenson was on equally pleasant but quite different terms. His interest in Molokai, even apart from Father Damien, always made his heart warm towards the priests and Catholic sisters; the accidental circumstance that all his best boys at Vailima

[1] The Rev. Dr. James Chalmers was killed at the Aird River in New Guinea, in April, 1901, as he was endeavouring to make peace between the natives who were engaged in a tribal war.

belonged to the Church of Rome strengthened the connection. For the Bishop he had a real appreciation: "a superior man, much above the average of priests"; "Monseigneur is not unimposing; with his white beard and his violet girdle he looks splendidly episcopal, and when our three waiting lads came one after another and kneeled before him in the big hall, and kissed his ring, it did me good for a piece of pageantry."

Of the spiritual merits of their work he was of course in no position to judge; but he always had a special admiration for the way in which they identified themselves with the natives and encouraged all native habits and traditions at all compatible with Christianity. Above all things he welcomed the fact that the influence of the chiefs was increased instead of weakened by their efforts. He agreed with them that it was better to concentrate their forces on people of rank than to impose such a democracy as that of some of the Protestant societies, for he felt that the salvation of Samoa lay in the chiefs, and that it was unfortunate that all white influence except that of the Catholics was in the line of diminishing their authority.

Thus the priests and the sisters from the Savalalo convent were always welcome guests, and not the less from the fact that French was the usual medium of intercourse.

Besides open house at Vailima, there also were many special entertainments, both those given in the house, and those shared with others or given by them in return in Apia. In addition to ordinary lunches or dinners, it was Stevenson's greatest delight to organise any festivity in which the natives could have a share, the

entertainment of a man-of-war's band, a feast on the completion of a Samoan house, or, above all, the great banquet given in native fashion to celebrate his own birthday. In Apia public balls were not infrequent; Stevenson became a willing pupil in the hands of his stepdaughter, and thenceforward took his part in the dances with delight.

But the balls in themselves deserve a passing word, for nowhere, since the world began, can the juxtaposition of incongruous elements have reached so high a point. Almost every one in Apia, without regard for social station, was invited, and all were welcome. Diplomatists and naval officers, traders and bar-keepers, clerks and mechanics, all came; and the residents brought their wives and daughters, white, half-caste, or whole Polynesian. On one point only was etiquette inexorable — no Samoan man could hope for admission unless some elderly and august chief were introduced as a spectator. But invitations were issued to such native girls as could dance and were otherwise suitable, and the "maid of a village" might frequently there be seen, dancing away in a native dress even more elaborate and scanty than those of her white sisters. And not only was social exclusiveness waived, but hostilities, public and private, were suspended at these remarkable entertainments. One night Stevenson found himself *vis-à-vis* with Chief-Justice Cedercrantz in a square dance, at a time when either was eagerly compassing the removal of the other from the island. "We dance here in Apia," he wrote, "a most fearful and wonderful quadrille; I don't know where the devil they fished it from, but it is rackety and prancing and

embraceatory beyond words; perhaps it is best defined in Haggard's expression of a gambado."[1] And of his rival: "We exchanged a glance and then a grin; the man took me in his confidence; and through the remainder of that prance, we pranced for each other."

Another time, during the fiercest moments of Anglo-German animosity, Mr. Osbourne, by the adroit use of a bow and arrow, secured the hand of the German Consul's wife for a cotillon; and at a Fourth of July dance given by the American Vice-Consul, all that gentleman's enemies might have been seen joining hands and dancing round him, while they sang, "For he 's a jolly good fellow." One ineffable family indeed carried out the rules of the game with so much rigour as to accept partners with whom they were not on speaking terms, and then to dance and speak not a word. But for the most part people entered readily into the spirit of the thing, and ill-will was left outside, while not only the lion and the lamb but the rival beasts of prey all frolicked happily together.

There is one difficulty to which I have not yet alluded —the question of language. Stevenson had, as he wrote, on entering the Pacific, "journeyed out of that comfortable zone of kindred languages, where the curse of Babel is so easy to be remedied," but the obstacle proved much less than he had anticipated. It is true that in Samoa few of the natives speak or really understand anything but their own tongue, but except for the fact that this has no analogies with any European speech, it is not very difficult to acquire for practical purposes. To it he soon addressed himself, and over

[1] *Vailima Letters*, 13th September, 1892.

the study of Samoan he spent a good deal of pains, even taking regular lessons from the Rev. S. J. Whitmee of the London Mission, the best Samoan scholar in the islands. His story of *The Bottle Imp* was translated by another member of the Mission for their magazine almost as soon as it was written, and has the unique distinction of having been published in Samoan before it appeared in English. Stevenson himself began as an exercise with his teacher to write in Samoan a story of Saxon times called *Eatuina* (Edwin), but only a few chapters were completed.

In Samoan there is a special vocabulary for addressing or mentioning high chiefs, which is naturally used on all solemn occasions and in all important correspondence. Stevenson mastered this sufficiently to understand it when it was spoken well, and not only to be able to write it with facility, but even to satisfy his own fastidious requirements in composing letters. The every-day speech he used for all household purposes, and could understand it himself without difficulty. But when there came a voluble rustic from a remote district, some small chief perhaps, who sat and "barked," as his unfortunate hearer said, in either dialect about matters beyond Tusitala's ken, the result was confusion. In matters of importance, where it was of the highest urgency that Stevenson should not be misunderstood, a good and really trustworthy interpreter was hardly to be procured outside the Mission, and from anything approaching politics the missionaries for the most part wisely held aloof. But this difficulty was gradually solved by Mr. Osbourne, who learned both usages very thoroughly, and spoke them in the end with fluency and ease.

There are few matters in which English readers have taken less interest than the political history of Samoa, even when it was written by Stevenson himself. Nevertheless, if I were to omit all reference to these affairs and the criticisms which Stevenson passed upon them, it would be supposed that I was letting judgment go against him by default. I propose therefore to give the briefest possible description of the government as it was from 1889 to 1894, relegating to the Appendix [1] a brief summary of the details, and the evidence for my assertions. Those who wish to find the matter treated most brilliantly, but at greater length, will find it in *A Foot-note to History* and Stevenson's letters to the *Times*.

Throughout his residence in Samoa, the government of the islands was controlled by a Treaty entered into at Berlin in 1889 between America, England, and Germany. Under this the native king was recognised by these three Great Powers, by whom two new white officials were also appointed — a Chief-Justice, receiving £1200 a year out of the Samoan treasury, and a President of the Municipal Council, who was to be paid £1000 a year by the Municipality and also act as adviser to the king. The Neutral Territory of the Municipality of Apia, in which most of the white population resided, was managed by a Council of six residents elected by the ratepayers, with the President as Chairman. A Land Commission of three representatives, one appointed by each of the three Powers, was to investigate all equitable claims of foreigners to the ownership of land in Samoa, and after the registration of such titles as were

[1] Appendix D, vol. ii. p. 237.

valid, none but a native might acquire the freehold of any part of Samoan territory.

The American and German Consuls-General and the British Consul retained their jurisdiction, and preserved much of the prestige they had enjoyed in the days before the Berlin Treaty, when the Consular Board had been the chief controlling power in Samoa. The British Consul also, as a Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific, had very despotic powers over all British subjects under the Orders in Council issued under the Pacific Islanders' Protection Act of 1875.

The principal white officials in Samoa were thus:—

The Chief-Justice.
The President of the Municipal Council.
The Three Consuls.
The Three Land Commissioners.

It is impossible to say whether the system thus founded could ever have worked satisfactorily among so many contending interests and at so great a distance from the paramount Governments, seated as these were at Berlin, London, and Washington, even if two competent Treaty officials possessed of experience and common sense had been promptly sent out to the scene of their duties. But there was undue delay, the wrong men were chosen, and the system was doomed.

The Chief-Justiceship was, failing the unanimous choice of the three Powers, given by the King of Sweden to a Swedish Assistant-Judge, Mr. Conrad Cedercrantz, while Baron Senfft von Pilsach, a German Regierungs-Assessor, was appointed by the Powers to be President of the Municipal Council.

For more than two years the pair drew their salaries and discharged what they conceived to be their duties in a fashion which is perfectly incredible until it is studied by the "cold light of consular reports." Stevenson was finally kindled to indignation by the outrage of the dynamite—a proposal to blow up some Samoan chiefs imprisoned for a political offence of no great gravity, if any attempt were made by their people to rescue them from jail. He wrote to the *Times* a series of letters which at first were generally disbelieved, but were afterwards confirmed in every important detail that was made known. It was a real bitterness to him to see fading away before his eyes perhaps the last opportunity for the restoration of order and prosperity to Samoa, as the natives watched the gambadoes of this extraordinary couple and the second-rate diplomacy or tardy and futile action of the three Great Powers.

The fight was keen, for the two Treaty officials did their best, as Stevenson believed, to have him deported; but the end was certain, whether it was due to the diplomatists or the *Times,* and the pair departed for other scenes of activity. But the evil had been done, and such opportunity as their successors had was frustrated by the arbitrary and vacillating interference of the consuls. On this subject Stevenson wrote three more letters dealing with the outrages which went on under the very noses of the consuls and the guns of the warships, with the weakness and the favouritism of the Government and the farce of disarming. But everything showed that the failure of the Berlin Treaty was complete, and that the only chance for Samoa was to abolish the triple control.

Stevenson took the chair at one public meeting in Apia, and apart from this his local interference in politics was limited to a few formal visits to native chiefs.[1] Once, however, by an accident it nearly took the most startling form of intervention possible. The king was all but shot dead in the large hall at Vailima by Mrs. Stevenson in her husband's presence. Suddenly one day in 1894 Malietoa came up without warning to pay a secret visit of reconciliation to Tusitala, attended only by a black-boy interpreter. In the course of the visit he happened to mention his wish for a revolver; Stevenson immediately went to the big safe in the corner of the room and produced one which he emptied of the cartridges and handed to his wife. Mrs. Stevenson found that there was something wrong with the trigger and tried it several times. Four times it clicked, the king leaned over in front to examine it, and then some unaccountable impulse made her inspect the pistol again. In the next chamber lay a cartridge which would inevitably have sent its charge into the king's brain. The smile and wave of the hand with which Malietoa greeted and dismissed the discovery were worthy of a stronger monarch and of a far greater kingdom. Had the bullet gone to its mark, it is idle to speculate on what would have happened, but it is clear at any rate that Stevenson could no longer have found a home in Samoa.

On most occasions he confined himself to giving his advice when it was asked, or when he saw any reasonable chance of its being accepted. I need hardly say that he never contributed one farthing or one farthing's

[1] Appendix D, vol. ii. p. 242.

worth towards any arming or provisioning of the natives, nor did he ever take any step or give any counsel or hint whatsoever that could possibly have increased the danger of war or diminished the hopes of a peaceful settlement.

If he had been asked what concern he had in the affairs of Samoa, or why he did not leave them in the hands of the consuls whose business they were, he would probably have answered that it *was* his business to vindicate the truth and to check misgovernment and oppression wherever he found them; that he had good reason to distrust the consuls; that Samoa was a remote spot where public opinion was helpless; and that the trustworthy means of publishing the real state of its affairs to the civilised world were few. And in support of this he would have instanced the case of the dynamite, the very name of which has been suppressed in all the blue-books and white-books of the three Powers; and the fact that the only newspaper in the island had been secretly purchased with the public money, printing-press, type and all, for the benefit of his opponents. Finally, that which he would never have pleaded for his own advantage may be urged for him in a disinterested sense: he had adopted Samoa as his country, and her enemies were his enemies, and he made her cause his own. It is difficult for people reading their newspapers at home to realise the entire difference of circumstances and conduct, and I freely confess that until I arrived in Samoa and saw the conditions for myself, I favoured the easier course of *laissez faire*.

It would give a false impression, however, if I neglected to mention the excitement of politics, which in

Europe is denied to all but the few diplomatists behind the scenes. In Apia every one knew the chief persons involved, both white and Samoan, and knew all, and much more than all, that was passing between them. As a young Irishman quoted by Stevenson said: "I never saw so good a place as this Apia; you can be in a new conspiracy every day." And to Stevenson himself at first the interest was absorbing: "You don't know what news is, nor what politics, nor what the life of man, till you see it on so small a scale and with your liberty on the board for stake." [1] But so futile and so harassing were these concerns, that before long he was glad to leave them on one side as far as he could, and devote himself once more to literature. He soon found politics "the dirtiest, the most foolish, and the most random of human employments": [2] and for the diplomatists—"You know what a French post-office or railway official is? That is the diplomatic card to the life. Dickens is not in it; caricature fails." [3]

Of the exact amount of influence that Stevenson possessed with the natives, it is hard to speak with any certainty. From what I have said of his stationary life it will be evident that there were many Samoans who had no opportunity of coming into contact with him at all; but in spite of this drawback his prestige and authority were gradually spreading, and his kindness and fidelity in misfortune produced a real effect upon the native mind. His influence was probably as great as that of any white resident in the islands, with the possible exception of two or three who had married native wives. But this, after all, did not amount to very

[1] *Letters*, ii. 276. [2] *Ibid.*, 295. [3] *Ibid.*, 334.

much; the Samoans, in common with other native races who have not been too well treated by the whites, have learned to protect themselves by an armour of reserve and diplomacy, and they seldom accepted any foreigner's advice unless it recommended to them the course which they were already disposed to follow. As Mr. Whitmee, who knew the islands well, said: "There have been paragraphs in British papers representing Mr. Stevenson as being something like a king in Samoa. I believe I have seen it stated that he might have been king of the islands had he wished. That was simple nonsense." (And, I may add, nonsense which irritated Stevenson more than almost any other idle rumour.) "But he was respected by the natives as a whole, and by many he was beloved."

His work was given at first entirely to the "letters" which were constructed out of the notes and journals of his voyages, and were themselves in turn the rough material of which he intended to compose his great book on the South Seas. "To get this stuff jointed and moving" was his first aim, but never did he labour to so little purpose. Some seventy "letters" in all were written, and his contract with Messrs. M'Clure was fulfilled; but the strain of production was excessive, and the result satisfied neither the author nor the public. The "bargain was quite unsuitable to his methods," for one thing;[1] for another, the material was unlimited and his knowledge was always increasing. Instead of the entertaining book of travels, full of personal interest and excitement, and abounding in picturesque descrip-

[1] *Vailima Letters*, p. 55.

tions of the scenery and manners of the South Seas, for which his readers so eagerly looked, they found a series of disconnected chapters on native beliefs with all or nearly all the sense of adventure left out, and but scanty information as to the details of travel upon which the public so dearly loves to be informed. That the *Voyage in the Sunbeam* should be a popular work and Stevenson's South Sea letters a failure is one of the tragedies of literature, but if any one will compare the letters from the Paumotus with the letter to R. A. M. Stevenson,[1] he will see that it was due to Stevenson's deliberate judgment, which in this instance for once was entirely mistaken. The experience he enjoyed most—the visit to Tahiti—remained unwritten; the part which the public awaited perhaps with most interest—the visit to Molokai—was not seriously attempted; and by the time the best letters were reached, those in which he describes his unique experiences in Apemama, his readers had lost heart; and indeed I believe the Tembinok' chapters never appeared in England at all. Thus he was well advised when in June, 1891, he abandoned the task, and cast about for some fresh work to take in hand.

First, for the sake of change, he began the history of his family, which he had contemplated for some time as the frame in which to include the long-projected memorial of his father. The greater part of his grandfather's life was ultimately finished, and now forms the *Family of Engineers*. He did not even begin the account of his uncle Alan, the builder of Skerryvore lighthouse, a man of extraordinary ability, who retired

[1] *Letters*, ii. 135.

from practice at an early age; and his father's life, except for the sketch of his boyhood already quoted, was likewise untouched. For the present little more than Chapter I. was written, and the book was taken up from time to time only as a relaxation from creative work.

The Wrecker, which had been left half finished since a month after his arrival in Samoa, was now taken in hand again on the return of his collaborator, and carried to a conclusion. It was written on the same plan as before, the first drafts of the San Francisco parts being written by Mr. Osbourne, who had no hand at all in the Paris days, or the scene at Barbizon.[1] The book perhaps appealed to too many interests to receive its due from any one class of readers. The following letter from the late Lord Pembroke is a testimonial to its accuracy, coming from one of the authors of *South Sea Bubbles*, who have done more almost than any one to make the Pacific familiar ground to the English reader: —

"I am afraid only a small minority in England can be really capable of appreciating *The Wrecker*. The majority don't know enough of the real big World to know how true it is, and they will infinitely prefer that most delightful story, *Treasure Island*. Perhaps it *is* a better story than *The Wrecker*, but to me there is the difference that *Treasure Island* might have been written by a man who had no knowledge of such matters but what he had got from books and a powerful imagination, while *The Wrecker* has the indefinite smack of reality, of real knowledge of what men and ships do in

[1] *Letters*, ii. 356.

that wild and beautiful world beyond the American continent."

In the meantime Stevenson's expeditions into the solitudes of the forest above his home led not only to the set of verses called *The Woodman*, written, as he says most of his verses were,[1] "at the autumnal equinox," but also to the beginning of the story which at first, as *The High Woods of Ulufanua*, turned on a supernatural element, and then came down to earth in its final form as *The Beach of Falesá*. To the style of this admirable story justice has been done by Professor Raleigh,[2] doubtless to the entire bewilderment of those people who could see nothing in it but a farrago of slang; but the astonishing merits of the tale and its setting can hardly be appreciated by any but those who have lived in "The Islands." Stevenson himself is as usual his own best critic, and though he gives it high praise, he says not a word too much: "It is the first realistic South Sea story; I mean with real South Sea character and details of life. Everybody else who has tried, that I have seen, got carried away by the romance, and ended in a kind of sugar-candy sham epic, and the whole effect was lost — there was no etching, no human grip, consequently no conviction. Now I have got the smell and look of the thing a good deal. You will know more about the South Seas after you have read my little tale than if you had read a library."[3] It is not a picture of any one island, though most of it would

[1] *Vailima Letters*, p. 245.

[2] *Robert Louis Stevenson*, by Walter Raleigh, p. 37. Edward Arnold, 1896.

[3] *Vailima Letters*, p. 88.

have been applicable at the time to any place in Samoa, if Apia had not existed. The darker features of the story, however, as I have said, were taken chiefly from some of the people then living in the Gilberts.

The Shovels of Newton French was the next long work which he planned, a chronicle of seven generations of a family, in which two other stories were to be embodied. In much the same way the chief story intended for a South Sea volume became absorbed in *Sophia Scarlet*,[1] and neither of the projects was ever realised.

The state of affairs in Samoa was becoming serious. As early as August of 1891 Stevenson had written to Mr. Baxter, "We sit and pipe upon a volcano, which is being stoked by bland, incompetent amateurs"; and he now determined that if the constitution should again go into the melting-pot, at least those who recast it should not be obliged to do their work in ignorance of the past. The material he had collected for his "letters" and the subsequent unwritten book was lying ready to hand with the first few chapters even drafted, and he began the *Foot-note to History*, worked at it under pressure, and had it finished in the following May.

The evidence he brought forward has never been met, the conclusion reached — that the Berlin Treaty was wholly unworkable — has long been recognised by everybody concerned; but for the time the only result achieved was that the edition of the *Foot-note to History* which Baron Tauchnitz prepared to issue for the Continent of Europe was burned by order of the German Government, and the publishers only escaped from further penalties by payment of a large sum to a charity

[1] 17th May, 1892, *Vailima Letters*, p. 161.

selected by the authorities. But in 1893 Chief-justice Cedercrantz and President von Pilsach were superseded, and the Germans, from being the bitter enemies of Stevenson's friend Mataafa, had by 1899 become his champions and the chief supporters of his claim.

Stevenson now turned again to Scotland for subjects, for the first time since he had finished *The Master*, and his power of reproducing the Scottish life and atmosphere among alien scenes and under widely different influences was shown once more in a no less remarkable degree. The *Foot-note* was but partly engaging his attention in January, 1892, when he received fresh material from Mr. Andrew Lang for a story dealing with the private adventures of the Young Chevalier. Its introduction was written in May, but in the meantime Stevenson took up the story of David Balfour at the point where he had left it six years before, and he now carried it on concurrently with the *Foot-note*, so that in spite of endless interruptions it was actually finished by the end of September. It was the first of his works that was completed while I was at Vailima, and I well remember the agitation and stress with which it was brought to a close. It lends no support to the theory that the continuation of a story is doomed to fail. If *Catriona* lacks unity of plot and that splendid swiftness of action which marked the best part of *Kidnapped*, it contains the story of Tod Lapraik, and in none of Stevenson's books save the last is there such wealth of character. We have David Balfour himself, strengthened and matured; Lord Prestongrange; Stewart the writer and his colleagues; Mrs. Allardyce; Barbara Grant, that most bewildering and charming of women,

who rendered even her creator disloyal to Catriona; and the two best Highlandmen in fiction, the incomparable Alan Breck again, and his foil, James Mohr. Of the original of the latter Mr. Andrew Lang says: "From first to last, James was a valiant, plausible, conscienceless, heartless liar, with a keen feeling for the point of honour, and a truly Celtic passion of affection for his native land. . . . Though unacquainted with the documents that we shall cite, Mr. Stevenson divined James Mohr with the assured certainty of genius." [1]

Catriona is perhaps the best example of the rule to which it was apparently an exception, that all its author's more considerable stories were done at two breaks. "I have to leave off," he wrote to Mr. Iles in 1887, "and forget a tale for a little; then I can return upon it fresh and with interest revived." During the composition of *Catriona* there was no long pause, but it had been "simmering" since 1886, and surely we may see no more than the two volumes of one book in the completed *Adventures of David Balfour*.

Again there was the question of what should be taken next. It so happened one afternoon at Vailima that I was the only person available, and Louis carried me off to debate the claims of two stories which he then unfolded — *Sophia Scarlet*, and what afterwards became *Weir of Hermiston*. Either on that day or about that time I remember very distinctly his saying to me: "There are, so far as I know, three ways, and three ways only, of writing a story. You may take a plot and fit characters to it, or you may take a character and

[1] *Pickle, the Spy*, by Andrew Lang, p. 231, 2nd edition 1897. There is much about James Mohr in the introduction to *Rob Roy*.

choose incidents and situations to develop it, or lastly — you must bear with me while I try to make this clear" — (here he made a gesture with his hand as if he were trying to shape something and give it outline and form) — "you may take a certain atmosphere and get action and persons to express and realise it. I 'll give you an example — *The Merry Men.* There I began with the feeling of one of those islands on the west coast of Scotland, and I gradually developed the story to express the sentiment with which that coast affected me."

It was on this last scheme that *Sophia Scarlet* had been conceived, the atmosphere being that of a large plantation in Tahiti, such as Mr. Stewart's had been at Atimono twenty years before.[1] It may be that the method did not lend itself readily to an effective sketch of the plot; the draft of the beginning of the story seems to me better than I thought the outline at the time. But in any case there could be no hesitation in the choice. *Weir of Hermiston* was begun, and for three or four days Stevenson was in such a seventh heaven as he has described:[2] he worked all day and all evening, writing or talking, debating points, devising characters and incidents, ablaze with enthusiasm, and abounding with energy. No finished story was, or ever will be, so good as *Weir of Hermiston* shone to us in those days by the light of its author's first ardour of creation.

Then he settled down, and a few days later read aloud to the family, as was his custom, the first draft of the opening chapters. After that but little progress was made, and in January, 1893, *St. Ives* was begun as a short story, the visit of the ladies to the prisoners in

[1] *South Sea Bubbles*, 24th August, 1870. [2] See vol. ii. p. 38.

Edinburgh being introduced at first as a mere episode without result. Stevenson was then attacked by hemorrhage: silence was imposed, and for several days he continued his work only by dictating to his stepdaughter on his fingers in the deaf-and-dumb alphabet. In this fashion he achieved from five to seven pages of manuscript a day. Before long, however, he left home with his wife and Mrs. Strong upon his last visit to Sydney, all work was stopped, and on his return in six weeks' time he began a short story for the *Illustrated London News*. He had lately been reading again Barbey d'Auréville, and his mind had turned to Brittany. The new tale dealt with the Chouans in 1793, and was to be called *The Owl*. But it did not prosper; the writer was not well, and he was anxious about his wife's health, and when one chapter had been written, he gave up the attempt and took up a half-finished piece of work, which afterward became *The Ebb Tide*.

This was a story begun with Mr. Osbourne in Honolulu just after their return from Tahiti, and known at that time as *The Pearl Fisher* and later as *The Schooner Farallone*. Mr. Osbourne had drafted the opening chapters, and no work of his had ever earned more praise from his stepfather. But at that moment an area of several acres behind the house was being cleared of forest and planted with pineapples for exportation — a scheme which it was hoped would make the plantation pay, and for the time being this engaged all Mr. Osbourne's energies. Stevenson, talking to me one day, produced the unfinished draft of the story, which at this time included only the first ten or eleven chapters, and debated what course he should pursue.

The fragment was originally intended as a prologue; Attwater was to be blinded with vitriol and then return to England. The remainder of the action of the book was to take place in England, and chiefly in Bloomsbury, where the Herricks lived. Stevenson now reconsidered the whole question, accepted a shorter ending, and grew more and more interested in the character of Attwater, as he worked it out. It is perhaps worth remarking that the picture of the arrival of the schooner at the new island gives better than anything else some of the charm of such cruises as those which delighted its author, who found no experience more exhilarating than "when you sight an island and drop anchor in a new world."[1]

The fables begun before he had left England and promised to Messrs. Longmans, he attacked again, and from time to time added to their number. The reference to Odin perhaps is due to his reading of the Sagas, which led him to attempt a tale in the same style, called "The Waif Woman." But I find no clue to any fresh study of Celtic legends that could have suggested the last and most beautiful fable of all, called "The Song of the Morrow," which dealt with the king's daughter of Duntrine, who "had no care for the morrow and no power upon the hour," and is like nothing else Stevenson ever wrote.

Besides all these and the letters to the *Times*, as well as his private correspondence, there were endless other schemes, for the most part projected and perhaps not even begun, never certainly brought near to completion. He wrote to Mr. Charles Baxter: "My schemes

[1] *Letters*, ii. 120.

are all in the air, and vanish and reappear again like shapes in the clouds." So likewise to Miss Boodle: "I have a projected, entirely planned love-story — everybody will think it dreadfully improper, I 'm afraid — called *Cannonmills*. And I 've a vague, rosy haze before me — a love-story too, but not improper — called *The Rising Sun*. It 's the name of the wayside inn where the story, or much of the story, runs; but it 's a kind of a pun: it means the stirring up of a boy by falling in love, and how he rises in the estimation of a girl who despised him, though she liked him and had befriended him. I really scarce see beyond their childhood yet, but I want to go beyond, and make each out-top the other by successions: it should be pretty and true if I could do it."

Neither of these was ever written. There was also a play for home representation, showing the adventures of an English tourist in Samoa; and I can remember two more serious schemes which were likewise without result. In the August before he died, he drew up with Mr. Osbourne the outline of a history, or of a series of the most striking episodes, of the Indian Mutiny, to be written for boys, and sent home for the books necessary for its execution. Another day he sketched the plan of an English grammar, to be illustrated by examples from the English classics. These are but a few, the many are unremembered; but all alike belong, not to the fleet of masterpieces unlaunched, but the larger and more inglorious squadron whose keels were never even laid down.

CHAPTER XVI

THE END — 1894

"Brief day and bright day
And sunset red,
Early in the evening,
The stars are overhead."
R. L. S.

"*Wanted Volunteers*
To do their best for twoscore years!
A ready soldier, here I stand,
Primed for Thy command,
With burnished sword.
If this be faith, O Lord,
Help Thou mine unbelief
And be my battle brief."
Envoy to No. XXV. of *Songs of Travel.*

THE climate of Samoa had apparently answered the main purpose of preserving Stevenson from any disabling attacks of illness, and allowing him to lead a life of strenuous activity. "I do not ask for health," he had said to his stepson at Bournemouth, "but I will go anywhere and live in any place where I can enjoy the ordinary existence of a human being." And this had now been granted to him beyond his utmost hope.

In all the time he was in Samoa he had but two or three slight hemorrhages, that were cured within a very few days. The consumption in his lungs was definitely arrested, but it seems certain that a structural weakening of the arteries was slowly and inevitably going on, al-

though his general health was apparently not affected. He had influenza at least once; occasionally he was ailing, generally with some indefinite lassitude which was attributed to malaria or some other unverifiable cause. In the summer of 1892 he was threatened with writers' cramp, which had attacked him as long ago as 1884. From this time forth, however, his step-daughter wrote to his dictation nearly all his literary work and correspondence, and, thanks to her quickness and unwearying devotion, he suffered the least possible inconvenience from this restriction of his powers. He had one or two threatenings of tropical diseases, which were promptly averted; and for several periods, to his own intense disgust, he gave up even the very moderate quantity of red wine which seemed to be a necessity of life to him, and — worst deprivation of all — he abandoned at these times the cigarettes which usually he smoked all day long.[1]

But in spite of these occasional lapses, he was able to lead an active life, full of varied interests, and the amount of work which he did during this period would have been satisfactory to less careful writers, even if they had done nothing else but follow their own profession without any interruption or diversion whatever.

In this respect Samoa was an infinite gain. If the tropical climate in any degree weakened the bodily fabric that might longer have borne the strain of his impetuous life in some more bracing air, no one can for a moment doubt what choice he himself would have made had he been offered five years of activity, of

[1] *Letters*, ii. 297.

cruising and riding and adventure, against five-and-twenty or fifty of existence in the sick-room and the sanatorium.

It was his friends and his country that he missed. From the day that Mr. Colvin went down the ship's side in the Thames, or the day that Mr. Low parted from him in New York, Stevenson never again saw any one of his old and intimate companions. Fortune was against him in the matter. They were all busy people, with many engagements and many ties, and when at last Mr. Charles Baxter was able to start for Samoa, he had not yet reached Egypt before the blow fell. Nor was this perversity of fortune confined to his old friends alone; it also affected the younger writers with whom, in spite of distance, he had formed ties more numerous, and, in proportion to their number, more intimate than have ever before been established and maintained at any such distance by correspondence alone. And it was the more tantalising because the paths of several seemed likely to lead them past the very island where he lived. So he had to content himself as best he might with his mail-bag, which, especially in the answers to the *Vailima Letters*, did much to remove for him the drawbacks of his isolation and of absence from the centres of literature to which he always looked for praise and blame.

But besides the loss of intercourse, he more than most men suffered from another pang. The love of country which is in all Scots, and beyond all others lies deepest in the Celtic heart, flowed back upon him again and again with a wave of uncontrollable emotion. When the "smell of the good wet earth" came to him, it

came "with a kind of Highland touch." A tropic shower discovered in him "a frame of mind and body that belonged to Scotland, and particularly to the neighbourhood of Callander." When he turned to his grandfather's life, he was filled with this yearning, and the beautiful sentences in which he has described[1] the old man's farewell to "Sumburgh and the wild crags of Skye" were his own valediction to those shores. No more was he to "see the topaz and the ruby interchange on the summit of the Bell Rock," no more to see the castle on its hill, or "the venerable city which he must always think of as his home." As he wrote of himself, "Like Leyden I have gone into far lands to die, not stayed like Burns to mingle in the end with Scottish soil."

It is not to be wondered that his letters show moods of depression which his indomitable spirit prevented him from manifesting at the time to those around him, and which perhaps beset him most when he turned to his correspondence. As has been well said:[2] "He was an exile, and though his exile lay in pleasant places, he had an exile's thoughts, and these were bound to be uppermost when he wrote to his old intimates."

There were times when he was tempted to risk everything, and to go back to the old life and the old friends, were it only for a few weeks, or even a few days. But he resisted the temptation, and fought on manfully to the end.

For the rest the advantages and drawbacks of his position were very evenly balanced: if absence threw him out of touch with what went on at home, it also

[1] Vol. i. p. 9. [2] *Quarterly Review*, No. 381, p. 196.

kept him clear of literary cliques and coteries, and saved him from many interruptions and calls upon his time; if it hindered his personal influence, it gave, as Mr. Quiller Couch has pointed out, a greater scope and leisure for his correspondence. His earlier Scotch novels were, as we have seen, not written in Scotland, and residence in that country could hardly have bettered his latest stories. On the other hand, among the work to which Polynesia diverted his attention there is nothing, as a whole, ranking as quite first-rate except *The Beach of Falesá*.

One drawback to Samoa there certainly was, redeemed by no corresponding advantage, and that was the inevitable delay in obtaining material or information. If a book were wanted, it was usually of such a date and character that it was mere waste of time to attempt to procure it nearer than London or Edinburgh, and this meant, under the most favourable circumstances, an interval of nearly three months, even if the right book existed or could be obtained at all.

This to a man of Stevenson's temperament and fertility was most unsettling; and it involved besides great waste of labour, and the abandonment of much work that had been well begun.

The difficulty of the life in Samoa was its great expense. In 1887 Stevenson had written: "Wealth is only useful for two things — a yacht and a string quartette. Except for these, I hold that £700 a year is as much as anybody can possibly want." But though he had neither the music nor the vessel, and was now making an income of six or seven times the amount mentioned, it was no more than enough to meet the

cost of his living and the needs of his generosity, while he was occasionally haunted by a fear lest his power of earning should come to an end.[1]

During the period of his residence at Vailima he returned but twice to the world of populous cities. In the early part of 1893 he paid a visit of several weeks to Sydney, and though as usual there he was much confined to his room, he derived from the trip a good deal of enjoyment. For the first time he realised that his fame had reached the Colonies, and though no man was ever under fewer illusions upon the point, he enjoyed the opportunities it gave him of meeting all sorts of people. Artists and Presbyterian ministers alike vied in entertaining him; at Government House he was just in time to see the last of Lord and Lady Jersey; and by this time there were at Sydney a number of friends in whose company he delighted, especially Dr. Fairfax Ross and the Hon. B. R. Wise. But the event which pleased and cheered him most was his meeting at Auckland with Sir George Grey, with whom he had more than one prolonged and most inspiring discussion upon the affairs of Samoa.

In September, 1893, he came up to Honolulu for the sake of the voyage, intending to return by the next steamer. After a week spent there I left him apparently quite well, and intending to sail for Samoa the next day. But in those four-and-twenty hours he developed pneumonia, and remained ill at Waikiki until his wife's arrival, and they did not reach Apia again before November. It was thus a period of illness, for it began with Ta'alolo, who had come to take care of his master,

[1] Cf. *Letters*, ii. 284.

himself taking measles, and for a time we were in a sort of quarantine. But it was a change from the limited society of Apia: Stevenson saw something of his many friends and acquaintances in Honolulu; he was entertained by his brother Scots of the Thistle Club, and elsewhere; and I remember a most impressive interview between him and the lately deposed queen, whom he had last seen in the days of her prosperity, when her brother was upon the throne.

On his return to Samoa several events occurred which gave him great pleasure. He had never wearied in his kindness and generosity towards any of the natives who were in trouble, and he was constant in seeing to the real needs of the Mataafa chiefs who were in prison. These services he rendered to them, as he rendered all service, without thought of reward or fear of misunderstanding, and it was all the more pleasant to him when the chiefs gave him first an elaborate native feast with full honours in the jail where they were still confined; and secondly, as soon as they were released, came as a mark of gratitude, and cleared and dug and completed the roadway which thereafter led to his house — the Ala Loto Alofa, the Road of the Loving Heart. It was a task of no inconsiderable magnitude, and employed a large number of men for several weeks. The whole labour and the whole cost were borne by the chiefs; the idea was theirs alone, the unprompted and spontaneous expression of their regard, and no ulterior motive has ever, so far as I am aware, been suggested by anybody to whom the circumstances were known. When it was finished, there was a solemn returning of thanks, and Stevenson's speech, which may be found

at the end of the *Vailima Letters*, was his best and most outspoken utterance to the people of Samoa.

In his writing also he met with a mark of recognition, to which he refused to allow full significance, the inception of the Edinburgh Edition of his works. Mr. Baxter, who had already rendered him invaluable service in disposing of his new books from time to time to the best advantage, had formed and among the most contending interests had carried out a scheme which, if successful, would bring in a sum of over five thousand pounds without involving any fresh strain upon the author. A complete edition of all the writings that Stevenson wished to be preserved was to be produced in the best possible form, and limited to a thousand copies. It was, I believe, the first of its kind, and was taken up with eagerness; in November, 1894, the first volume was issued, and was everywhere hailed with unbounded applause and congratulation. "My dear fellow," he wrote to Mr. Baxter, "I wish to assure you of the greatness of the pleasure that this Edinburgh Edition gives me. I suppose it was your idea to give it that name. No other would have affected me in the same manner. Do you remember, how many years ago — I would be afraid to hazard a guess — one night when I communicated to you certain intimations of early death and aspirations after fame? I was particularly maudlin; and my remorse the next morning on a review of my folly has written the matter very deeply in my mind; from yours it may easily have fled. If any one at that moment could have shown me the Edinburgh Edition, I suppose I should have died. It is with gratitude and wonder that I consider 'the way

in which I have been led.' Could a more preposterous idea have occurred to us in those days when we used to search our pockets for coppers, too often in vain, and combine forces to produce the threepence necessary for two glasses of beer, or wandered down the Lothian Road without any, than that I should be strong and well at the age of forty-three in the island of Upolu, and that you should be at home bringing out the Edinburgh Edition?"[1]

In the end of September he wearied of *St. Ives* within sight of its conclusion, and fortunately turned again to *Weir of Hermiston*. It was the third time he had taken it in hand, for he would not work at it when he felt uncertain of himself. But his insight was at its clearest, his touch most sure, and his style, as always when he approached Scotland in his novels, was at its simplest and best. "He generally makes notes in the early morning," wrote Mrs. Strong in her diary on September 24th, "which he elaborates as he reads them aloud. In *Hermiston* he has hardly more than a line or two to keep him on the track, but he never falters for a word, but gives me the sentences with capital letters and all the stops, as clearly and steadily as though he were reading from an unseen book."

October and November passed; Stevenson remained hard at work, and to all appearance in his ordinary health. His birthday was celebrated by the usual native feast, and on Thanksgiving Day, November 29th, he gave a dinner to all his American friends. What remains to tell has been so related by Mr. Osbourne that no other account is possible or to be desired, and

[1] *Letters*, ii. 328.

although it has been already printed in the *Letters*, I must thank him for allowing it again to appear in these pages.[1]

"He wrote hard all that morning of the last day; his half-finished book, *Hermiston*, he judged the best he had ever written, and the sense of successful effort made him buoyant and happy as nothing else could. In the afternoon the mail fell to be answered; not business correspondence — for this was left till later — but replies to the long, kindly letters of distant friends, received but two days since, and still bright in memory.

"At sunset he came downstairs; rallied his wife about the forebodings she could not shake off; talked of a lecturing tour to America that he was eager to make, 'as he was now so well,' and played a game at cards with her to drive away her melancholy. He said he was hungry; begged her assistance to help him make a salad for the evening meal; and to enhance the little feast he brought up a bottle of old Burgundy from the cellar. He was helping his wife on the verandah, and gaily talking, when suddenly he put both hands to his head, and cried out, 'What 's that?' Then he asked quickly, 'Do I look strange?' Even as he did so he fell on his knees beside her. He was helped into the great hall, between his wife and his body-servant, Sosimo, losing consciousness instantly, as he lay back in the arm-chair that had once been his grandfather's. Little time was lost in bringing the

[1] I had left Samoa five weeks before for a long cruise in the Islands, and the news first reached me in the Carolines in the following March. On November 25th we had sighted the roofs of Vailima from the sea, but the future was hidden from us, and we continued on our way.

doctors — Anderson, of the man-of-war, and his friend Dr. Funk. They looked at him and shook their heads; they laboured strenuously and left nothing undone; but he had passed the bounds of human skill.

"The dying man lay back in the chair, breathing heavily, his family about him frenzied with grief as they realised all hope was past. The dozen and more Samoans that formed part of the little clan of which he was chief sat in a wide semicircle on the floor, their reverent, troubled, sorrow-stricken faces all fixed upon their dying master. Some knelt on one knee to be instantly ready for any command that might be laid upon them. A narrow bed was brought into the centre of the room; the Master was gently laid upon it, his head supported by a rest, the gift of Shelley's son. Slower and slower grew his respiration, wider the interval between the long, deep breaths. The Rev. Mr. Clarke was now come, an old and valued friend; he knelt and prayed as the life ebbed away.

"He died at ten minutes past eight on Monday evening the 3rd of December, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

"The great Union Jack that flew over the house was hauled down and laid over the body, fit shroud for a loyal Scotsman. He lay in the hall which was ever his pride, where he had passed the gayest and most delightful hours of his life, a noble room with open stairway and mullioned windows. In it were the treasures of his far-off Scottish home: the old carved furniture, the paintings and busts that had been in his father's house before him. The Samoans passed in procession beside his bed, kneeling and kissing his hand, each in

turn, before taking their places for the long night watch beside him. No entreaty could induce them to retire, to rest themselves for the painful and arduous duties of the morrow. It would show little love for Tusitala, they said, if they did not spend their last night beside him. Mournful and silent, they sat in deep dejection, poor, simple, loyal folk, fulfilling the duty they owed their chief.

"A messenger was despatched to a few chiefs connected with the family, to announce the tidings and bid them assemble their men on the morrow for the work there was to do.

"Sosimo asked on behalf of the Roman Catholics that they might be allowed to recite the prayers for the dead. Till midnight the solemn chants continued, the prolonged, sonorous prayers of the Church of Rome, in commingled Latin and Samoan. Later still, a chief arrived with his retainers, bringing a precious mat to wrap about the dead.

"He, too, knelt and kissed the hand of Tusitala, and took his place amid the sleepless watchers. Another arrived with a fine mat, a man of higher rank, whose incipient consumption had often troubled the Master.

"'*Talofa, Tusitala!*' he said, as he drew nigh and took a long, mournful look at the face he knew so well. When, later on, he was momentarily required on some business of the morrow, he bowed reverently before retiring. '*Tofa, Tusitala!*' he said, 'Sleep, Tusitala!'

"The morning of the 4th of December broke cool and sunny, a beautiful day, rare at this season of the year. More fine mats were brought, until the Union

Jack lay nigh concealed beneath them. Among the newcomers was an old Mataafa chief, one of the builders of the 'Road of the Loving Heart,' a man who had spent many days in prison for participation in the rebellion. 'I am only a poor Samoan, and ignorant,' said he, as he crouched beside the body. 'Others are rich and can give Tusitala the parting presents of rich fine mats; I am poor and can give nothing this last day he receives his friends. Yet I am not afraid to come and look the last time in my friend's face, never to see him more till we meet with God. Behold! Tusitala is dead; Mataafa is also dead to us. These two great friends have been taken by God. When Mataafa was taken, who was our support but Tusitala? We were in prison, and he cared for us. We were sick, and he made us well. We were hungry, and he fed us. The day was no longer than his kindness. You are great people and full of love. Yet who among you is so great as Tusitala? What is your love to his love? Our clan was Mataafa's clan, for whom I speak this day; therein was Tusitala also. We mourn them both.'

"A meeting of chiefs was held to apportion the work and divide the men into parties. Forty were sent with knives and axes to cut a path up the steep face of the mountain, and the writer himself led another party to the summit — men chosen from the immediate family — to dig the grave on a spot where it was Mr. Stevenson's wish that he should lie. Nothing more picturesque can be imagined than the narrow ledge that forms the summit of Vaea, a place no wider than a room, and flat as a table. On either side the land descends precipi-

tously; in front lie the vast ocean and the surf-swept reefs; to the right and left, green mountains rise, densely covered with the primeval forest. Two hundred years ago the eyes of another man turned towards that same peak of Vaea, as the spot that should ultimately receive his war-worn body: Soalu, a famous chief.

"All the morning Samoans were arriving with flowers; few of these were white, for they have not learned our foreign custom, and the room glowed with the many colours. There were no strangers on that day, no acquaintances; those only were called who would deeply feel the loss. At one o'clock a body of powerful Samoans bore away the coffin, hid beneath a tattered red ensign that had flown above his vessel in many a remote corner of the South Seas. A path so steep and rugged taxed their strength to the utmost, for not only was the journey difficult in itself, but extreme care was requisite to carry the coffin shoulder-high.

"Half an hour later the rest of his friends followed. It was a formidable ascent, and tried them hard. Nineteen Europeans and some sixty Samoans reached the summit. After a short rest the Rev. W. E. Clarke read the burial service of the Church of England, interposing a prayer that Mr. Stevenson had written and had read aloud to his family only the evening before his death:

> "We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favour, folk of many families and nations gathered together in the peace of this roof, weak men and women subsisting under the covert of Thy patience.
>
> "Be patient still; suffer us yet awhile longer;—

with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavours against evil, suffer us awhile longer to endure, and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us to play the man under affliction. Be with our friends, be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest; if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns, return to us, our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts — eager to labour — eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion — and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it.

"We thank Thee and praise Thee; and in the words of Him to whom this day is sacred, close our oblation.

"Another old friend, the Rev. J. E. Newell, who had risen from a sick-bed to come, made an address in the Samoan language.

"No stranger's hand touched him. It was his body-servant that interlocked his fingers and arranged his hands in the attitude of prayer. Those who loved him carried him to his last home; even the coffin was the work of an old friend. The grave was dug by his own men."

So there he was laid to rest, and in after-time a large tomb in the Samoan fashion, built of great blocks of cement, was placed upon the grave. On either side there is a bronze plate: the one bearing the words in

Samoan, "The Tomb of Tusitala," followed by the speech of Ruth to Naomi, taken from the Samoan Bible:—

"Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried."

At the sides of the inscription were placed a thistle and a hibiscus flower.

Upon the other panel, in English, is his own *Requiem:*—

A ROBERT LOUIS Ω
1850 STEVENSON. 1894

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

Since his death the chiefs have tabooed the use of fire-arms upon the hillside where he lies, that the birds may live there undisturbed, and raise about his grave the songs he loved so well.

The proposal that a memorial pillar should be erected on the hill to serve as a sea-mark was abandoned. Besides the difficulties of transport and of keeping the summit always clear of trees, there was the real danger of the slight but frequent shocks of earthquake by which any kind of column would sooner or later have been overthrown.

In 1897 a monument to Stevenson was erected by

public subscription in the Plaza of San Francisco. It is a granite pedestal supporting a bronze galleon, designed by Mr. Bruce Porter, who also with Mr. Gelett Burgess is responsible for the plates of the monument in Samoa.

A large and most enthusiastic meeting was held in Edinburgh in December, 1896. Committees were formed in most of the chief cities of Great Britain, and finally Mr. St. Gaudens was requested to produce a monument to be placed upon the walls of the Cathedral Church of St. Giles in Edinburgh.

R. L. S.

Thin-legged, thin-chested, slight unspeakably,
Neat-footed and weak-fingered: in his face—
Lean, large-boned, curved of beak, and touched with race,
Bold-lipped, rich-tinted, mutable as the sea,
The brown eyes radiant with vivacity—
There shines a brilliant and romantic grace,
A spirit intense and rare, with trace on trace
Of passion, impudence, and energy.
Valiant in velvet, light in ragged luck,
Most vain, most generous, sternly critical,
Buffoon and poet, lover and sensualist:
A deal of Ariel, just a streak of Puck,
Much Antony, of Hamlet most of all,
And something of the Shorter-Catechist.

A Book of Verses, p. 41, by W. E. Henley, published by D. Nutt, 1888.

Of Stevenson's personal aspect and bodily powers it may be fitting here to make mention. Of his appearance the best portraits and photographs give a fair idea, if each be considered as the rendering of only one expression. The frontispiece of Volume I. is from a charcoal head drawn by Mrs. Stevenson at Grez as long

ago as 1877, and redrawn for this book by Mr. T. Blake Wirgman. It will be seen that the eyes were the most striking feature of the face; they were of the deepest brown in colour, set extraordinarily wide apart. At most times they had a shy, quick glance that was most attractive, but when he was moved to anger or any fierce emotion, they seemed literally to blaze and glow with a fiery light. His hair was fair and even yellow in colour until he was five-and-twenty; after that it rapidly deepened, and in later years was quite dark, but of course without any touch of black. When he reached the tropics, and the fear of taking cold was to some extent removed, he wore it short once more, to his own great satisfaction and comfort. His complexion was brown and always high, even in the confinement of the sick-room; the only phrase for it is the "rich-tinted" used by Mr. Henley in the spirited and vivid lines he has kindly permitted me to quote.

In height he was about five feet ten, slender in figure, and thin to the last degree. In all his movements he was most graceful: every gesture was full of an unconscious beauty, and his restless and supple gait has been well compared to the pacing to and fro of some wild forest animal. To this unusual and most un-English grace it was principally due that he was so often taken for a foreigner. We have seen that Mr. Lang found his appearance at three-and-twenty like anything but that of a Scotsman, and the same difficulty pursued Stevenson through life, more especially on the Continent of Europe. "It is a great thing, believe me," he wrote in the *Inland Voyage*, "to present a good normal type of the nation you belong to"; and as he says in the same

chapter, "I might come from any part of the globe, it seems, except from where I do." In France he was sometimes taken for a Frenchman from some other province; he has recorded his imprisonment as a German spy; and at a later date he wrote, "I have found out what is wrong with me—I look like a Pole."

This difficulty, of course, was not smoothed by the clothes he used to wear, which often in early days were extremely unconventional, and of which he then took so little notice that at times they were even ragged. In cool climates he often used a velveteen smoking-jacket; in undress at Vailima he wore flannels or pyjamas, with sometimes a light Japanese kimono for dressing-gown. On public occasions in Samoa he used the white drill that constitutes full dress in the tropics, with perhaps light breeches and boots if he had been riding.

Considering his fragility, his muscular strength was considerable, and his constitution clearly had great powers of resistance. Perhaps what helped him as much as anything was the faculty he had under ordinary circumstances of going to sleep at a moment's notice. Thus, if he anticipated fatigue in the evening, he would take a quarter of an hour's sound sleep in the course of the afternoon.

His speech was distinctly marked with a Scottish intonation, that seemed to every one both pleasing and appropriate, and this, when he chose, he could broaden to the widest limits of the vernacular. His voice was always of a surprising strength and resonance, even when phthisis had laid its hand most heavily upon him. It was the one gift he really possessed for the stage, and in reading aloud he was unsurpassed. In his full rich

tones there was a sympathetic quality that seemed to play directly on the heart-strings like the notes of a violin. Mrs. Stevenson writes: "I shall never forget Louis reading Walt Whitman's *Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,* followed by *O Captain, my Captain,* to a room full of people, some of whom had said that Whitman lacked sentiment and tenderness. All alike, men and women, sat spellbound during the reading, and I have never seen any audience so deeply moved." Nor for my part shall I forget his rendering of the Duke of Wellington Ode on the evening after the news of Tennyson's death had arrived at Vailima.

When his attention was given to objects or persons, his observation was singularly keen and accurate, but for the most part his memory for the faces of his acquaintance was positively bad. In Apia he seldom could tell the name of a native, and on his last visit to Honolulu I remember that he walked the streets in dread lest he should disappoint any who expected to be remembered and to receive his greeting. In a letter speaking of the death of a lady whom he had not met probably for twenty years, he says, "I partly see her face, and entirely and perfectly hear her voice at this moment — a thing not usual with me."

His hearing was singularly acute, although the appreciation of the exact pitch of musical notes was wanting. But between delicate shades of pronunciation he could discriminate with great precision. I can give an instance in point. The vowels in Polynesian languages are pronounced as in Italian, and the diphthongs retain the sounds of the separate vowels, more or less slurred together. Thus it can be understood that the difference

between *ae* and *ai* at the end of a word in rapid conversation is of the very slightest, and in Samoa they are practically indistinguishable. In the Marquesas Stevenson was able to separate them. At Vailima one day we were making trial of these and other subtleties of sound; in almost every case his ear was exactly correct. Nothing more shook his admiration for Herman Melville than that writer's inability to approximate to the native names of the Marquesas and Tahiti, and in his own delicate hearing lay perhaps the root of his devotion to style.

CHAPTER XVII

R. L. S.

"Who is it that says most? which can say more
Than this rich praise,—that you alone are you?"

For any who have read the foregoing pages it should be unnecessary here to dwell upon the sources of many qualities which distinguished Stevenson throughout his life, or the degree to which they were called forth in turn or affected by the many variations of his environment. A Scot born, we have seen how Edinburgh and Swanston set the seal upon his nationality, and how from father and mother he drew diverse elements of temperament and character. We have seen the effect of his schooling, such as it was, and the prolonged leisure of his boyhood; of the influence of his friends and his reading; the results of his training as an engineer and as an advocate; of his wanderings in France, his breakdown in America, and the happiness of his married life.

In several respects it must be owned that he was fortunate. His long preludes and painful apprenticeship would clearly have proved impossible had it been necessary for him to make money at an early age, and even the history of his maturity would have been materially changed if he had been compelled to rely solely upon his writing to meet the expenses of his household. His late beginning had, again, this advantage: tardy in some ways as he was, he had left behind him

the ignobler elements of youth before his voice was heard or recognised. The green-sickness of immaturity was over, at the worst only one or two touches of self-consciousness remained, and even in his earliest published essays there rings out the note of high spirit and cheerfulness which issued from the sick-room of later years, deceived for a time the most penetrating of critics, and was perhaps the best part of his message to a world that had fallen on weary days.

In regarding Stevenson both as man and writer we find that the most unusual fact about him was the coupling of the infinite variety of his character and intellect with the extraordinary degree in which he was moved by every thought and every feeling. Few men are acted upon by so wide a range of emotions and ideas; few men hold even two or three ideas or feel even a few emotions with nearly as much intensity as compelled him under all. When we have considered both number and degree, we shall find other gifts no less remarkable and even more characteristic—the unfailing spirit of chivalry and the combination of qualities that went to make up his peculiar and individual charm. Though it is inevitable thus to take him piecemeal and to dwell upon one side at a time to the exclusion of the others he so rapidly turned upon us, we must never allow this process to efface in our minds what is far more essential—the image of the living whole.

I have spoken of him at once as a man and a writer, for in his case there was no part of the writer which was not visibly present in the man. There are authors

whose work bears so little apparent relation to themselves, that we either wonder how they came to write so good a book, or else in our hearts we wish their books more worthy of the men. To neither of these classes does Stevenson belong. His works are "signed all over," and despite the chameleon-like nature of his style,[1] but few consecutive sentences on any page of his could have been written by any other person. Authorship provided him with a field for his energies and brought him the rewards of success, but did not otherwise change him from what he was, nor did it even exercise the whole of his faculties or exhaust the supply of his ideas.

If I have failed to produce a correct impression of his intense energy, I have quoted him and written to little purpose. The child with his "fury of play"; the boy walking by himself in the black night and exulting in the consciousness of the bull's-eye beneath his coat; the lad already possessed with the invincible resolve of learning to write, which for the time overcame the desire of all other action: these were but the father of the man. So vehement were his emotions, his own breast was too small to contain them. He paid a visit at nineteen to a place he had not seen since childhood. "As I felt myself on the road at last that I had been dreaming of for these many days before, a perfect intoxication of joy took hold upon me; and I was so pleased at my own happiness that I could let none past me till I had taken them into my confidence."[2]

It is useless to go on quoting: through life he did the

[1] Appendix G. [2] *Juvenilia*, p. 96.

thing he was doing as if it were the one thing in the world that was worth being done. I will give but one more example, premising that its essence lies in its very triviality: the smaller the matter at stake, the more surprising is the blaze of energy displayed. One day he was talking to a lady in his house at Bournemouth, at a time when he was recovering from hemorrhage, and visitors and conversation were both strictly forbidden. A book of Charles Reade's—*Griffith Gaunt*, I think—was mentioned, and nothing would serve Stevenson but that he should run to a cold room at the top of the house to get the volume. His visitor first tried to prevent it, then refused to wait for his return, and was only dissuaded from her resolve by being told (and she knew it to be true) that if he heard that she had left the house he would certainly run after her down the drive without waiting for either hat or coat.

"The formal man is the slave of words," he said; and as a consequence of his own fiery intensity, no man was ever less imposed upon by the formulas of other people. His railing against the burgess, for example, was no catchword, but the inmost and original feeling of his heart. Consequently, whenever he uttered a commonplace, it will be usually found that he had rediscovered the truth of it for himself, did not say it merely because he had heard it from somebody else, and generally invested it with some fresh quality of his own. Perhaps his most emphatic utterance in this respect, and that most resembling his conversation in certain moods, is the *Lay Morals*, all the more outspoken because it was never finished for press. It abounds in sayings such as these: "It is easy to be an ass and to

follow the multitude like a blind, besotted bull in a stampede; and that, I am well aware, is what you and Mrs. Grundy mean by being honest." "It is to keep a man awake, to keep him alive to his own soul and its fixed design of righteousness, that the better part of moral and religious education is directed; not only that of words and doctors, but the sharp ferule of calamity under which we are all God's scholars till we die." "Respectability: the deadliest gag and wet blanket that can be laid on men." "I have only to read books, to think . . . the mass of people are merely speaking in their sleep."

So when he spoke, he spoke direct from his own reflection and experience, and when he prayed, he did not hesitate to pass beyond the decorous ring-fence supposed to include all permissible objects of prayer; he gave thanks for "the work, the food, and the bright skies that make our lives delightful," and honestly and reverently made his petition that he might be granted gaiety and laughter. These instances are on the surface, but in spiritual matters he had a rare power of leaving on one side the non-essential and going straight to the heart of the difficulty, that was hardly realised by the world at large. Taine's charge against Scott that "he pauses on the threshold of the soul" has been renewed against Stevenson. For one thing, in spite of his apparent frankness, he had a deep reserve on the things that touched him most profoundly, and never wore his heart upon his sleeve. So far as the criticism applies to his writings, it is little less untrue than that which called him "a faddling hedonist," and its injustice has been shown by Mr. Colvin;[1] so far as it ap-

[1] *Letters*, i. 18.

plies to himself, it must be met by a contradiction. He was a man who had walked in the darkest depths of the spirit, and had known the bitterness of humiliation. But in that valley—of which he never spoke—he too, like the friend whom he commemorates,[1] "had met with angels"; he too had "found the words of life."

To return to his plain speaking, in literature he was equally sincere. Sir Walter Scott was for him "out and away the king of the romantics." But if a discerning estimate of Scott's shortcomings, as well as his merits, is desired, it can hardly be found more justly expressed in few words than on the last page but one of "A Gossip on Romance."

In composition also no one who produced so much has probably ever been so little the victim of the stereotyped phrase as Stevenson. A few mannerisms he had, no doubt—"it was a beautiful clear night of stars"—but they were from his own mint, and it was oftenest he himself who first called attention to them.

For the most part the effect on his writing of the ardour of which I am speaking is to be seen in two ways—in his diligence and in the intellectual intensity of the work produced. If ever capacity for taking pains be accounted genius in literature, no one can deny the possession of the supreme gift to Stevenson. To Mr. Iles he wrote, in 1887: "I imagine nobody had ever such pains to learn a trade as I had; but I slogged at it day in and day out; and I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world." In 1876 he reckoned that his final copy involved ten times the

[1] *Memories and Portraits*, p. 121.

actual quantity of writing; in 1888 the articles for *Scribner's Magazine* were written seven or eight times; the year before his death he told Mr. Crockett that it had taken him three weeks to write four-and-twenty pages. His prose works, exclusive of his published letters, run to nearly eight thousand pages of the Edinburgh Edition—three hundred words to a page. Nine-tenths of this was written within less than twenty years; and there were, besides, more or less completely conceived, many novels, stories, essays, histories, biographies, and plays, which occupied no inconsiderable amount of his attention within that time.

Moreover, besides the matter there was the form, and this from first to last continually engaged him. In the early seventies there were not many writers in this country to whom style was a matter of life or death, or if it were so, their aspirations were mostly hidden and unrealised. But to Stevenson from the beginning the technical problem was always present; with less fire the work of art had been less completely welded into an expression of the whole nature of the man; with less diligence the file-marks would seldom have been so completely removed. His style matured in simplicity and breadth as the years of labour brought their reward: it varied, of course, with the subject in hand; but not the least excellence of the instrument thus evolved is that it never failed of adaptation to whatever new class of writing its creator essayed.

The present point, however, is the energy and perseverance which prepared and secured the mastery, and in reviewing the amount of Stevenson's finished work, neither the quantity sacrificed in the process must be

forgotten, nor the extreme compression of the remainder. His was not the pen that covers page after page without an effort, unblotted and uncondensed, but the tool of the man who, in Mr. Kipling's phrase, "makes most delicate inlay-work in black and white, and files out to the fraction of a hair." In his own words, the only test of writing that he knew was this: "If there is anywhere a thing said in two sentences that could have been as clearly and as engagingly and as forcibly said in one, then it 's amateur work." And the main thing in which he thought his own stories failed was this: "I am always cutting the flesh off their bones."

Of such material he produced nearly four hundred pages a year for twenty years, and of the conditions under which most of it was done he wrote to Mr. George Meredith in 1893:—

"For fourteen years I have not had a day's real health; I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary; and I have done my work unflinchingly. I have written in bed, and written out of it, written in hemorrhages, written in sickness, written torn by coughing, written when my head swam for weakness; and for so long, it seems to me I have won my wager and recovered my glove. I am better now, have been, rightly speaking, since first I came to the Pacific; and still, few are the days when I am not in some physical distress. And the battle goes on—ill or well, is a trifle; so as it goes. I was made for a contest, and the Powers have so willed that my battlefield should be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle."

But besides the energy spent on the work there is

also the intensity of his intelligence. He had no vast memory like Scott's, but he remembered to a most unusual extent his own emotions and sensations, and the events of his past life, and what remained in his mind preserved its freshness and a lifelike sharpness of outline.

If Stevenson's claim to genius is to be based upon any single gift, it is this quality that most deserves such recognition, nor can it well be refused, if Baudelaire's definition be regarded as adequate: *Le génie n'est que l'enfance retrouvée à volonté.* The paper on "Child's Play," the *Child's Garden of Verses*, and certain passages quoted in the earlier pages of this book display a power of returning to the ideas and feelings of childhood which has seldom if ever been shown in a higher degree, or has existed except along with intellectual powers of a very considerable calibre.

It related also to the ordinary sensations of maturity. We have all been active and all been tired, but who has given us such pictures of activity and of fatigue as Stevenson? Consider the account of his tobogganing, place beside it the calm of weariness following exercise described in "Walking Tours," or the drowsy labour of the end of the *Inland Voyage*, and then recall David Balfour. "By what I have read in books, I think few that have held a pen were ever really wearied, or they would write of it more strongly. I had no care of my life, neither past nor future, and I scarce remembered there was such a lad as David Balfour; I did not think of myself, but just of each fresh step, which I was sure would be my last, with despair, and of Alan, who was the cause of it, with hatred."[1]

[1] *Kidnapped*, chap. xxii.

It was not only, however, in the recalling of his past life that Stevenson showed this concentration of mind, for the effect of such works as *Jekyll and Hyde* is due to the intense realisation of the situations evoked, by which new life was breathed into worn-out themes.

As in books so in correspondence. Letters were at times to Stevenson an irksome duty, at others a welcome opportunity for the outpouring of himself to his friends, but in haste or in delight it was entirely without calculation that he dictated or wrote. It occurred suddenly to him one day that his letters to Mr. Colvin from Samoa "would make good pickings" after his death, "and a man could make some kind of a book out of it without much trouble."[1] So little have people understood his character and moods that after this point they have found in the *Vailima Letters* a self-conscious tone and a continual appeal to the gallery.

To see him was utterly to disbelieve in any regard of ulterior motives. He was his father's son, and with him, also, "his affections and emotions, passionate as these were, and liable to passionate ups and downs, found the most eloquent expression both in words and gestures. Love, anger, and indignation shone through him and broke forth in imagery, like what we read of Southern races." If he were talking, he was seldom for a moment still, but generally paced restlessly up and down the room, using his hands continually to emphasize what he was saying, but with gestures that seemed purely necessary and natural.

It is very difficult to give the impression of his demeanour and the brilliancy of his talk without falling

[1] *Vailima Letters*, June, 1892.

into the contrary error, and suggesting a self-consciousness full of acting and exaggeration. Nothing could be further from the truth, and it is easily shown. His singleness of mind always, in later days at any rate, impressed friends and foes alike with his sincerity of purpose. He was no sportsman and no athlete—fragile and long-haired[1]—yet nobody ever hinted he was unmanly: he was given to preaching, and himself not beyond reproach, yet no one for an instant suspected him of hypocrisy. Whatever he did he did with his whole heart, and it was hard for any one to think otherwise. All the foibles of mysteriousness and secrecy which formed a part of his life in student days fell away from him before the end. The burden of responsibility had diminished, it may be, the gaiety of his temper; but his character shone out the more clearly as the years showed the man.

If Stevenson delivered himself over, heart and soul, as I have said, to the absorbing interest or the ruling passion of the moment, it was assuredly not for the want of other interests or other passions. Of the many-sidedness of his mind the variety of his works is surely sufficient evidence, and even these by no means exhausted the whole of his resources. He wrote novels—the novel of adventure, the novel of character, the novel of incident; he wrote short stories and essays of all kinds—their variety it is impossible even to characterise; he wrote history and biography, fables and moralities, and treatises on ethics; he wrote poems—blank verse, lyrics and ballads, songs and poetry for

[1] See, however, vol. ii. p. 190.

children; he wrote plays, ranging from melodrama to genteel comedy; books of travel reflective and descriptive; he composed prayers and lay sermons, and even ventured on political speculation.

All were not of equal merit—that is not now to the point—but it would not be difficult to pick out at least ten works differing widely from each other, but all definitely belonging to the highest class of their kind. Only one verdict is possible, and for that it is necessary to lay hands upon a commonplace, and appropriate it to the benefit of the man who has best right to the distinction. It is curious that the saying was first made for Goldsmith, the best loved among our authors of the eighteenth century, the one who, in Professor Raleigh's phrase, shares with Stevenson "the happy privilege of making lovers among his readers." But of Stevenson it is even more true to say with Dr. Johnson: *Nullum fere scribendi genus non tetigit, nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.*

For this diversity of power and achievement I have relied on the evidence of his published writings, because it would otherwise appear incredible. But account must also be taken of at least a part of his unfinished and unpublished work, differing again in kind; and to that in turn must be added the indications in his letters of other veins of character or reflection that were never worked at all. Over and above all there was the talk of the man himself, in which the alternations were even more rapid and more striking.[1] Wit, humour, and pathos; the romantic, the tragic, the picturesque;

[1] For the admirable description by Mr. Colvin and Mr. Henley, see *Letters*, vol. i. pp. xxxvii, xxxviii.

stern judgment, wise counsel, wild fooling, all fell into their natural places, followed each other in rapid and easy succession, and made a marvellous whole, not the least of the wonder being the congruity and spontaneity which gave to it the just effect of being a perfectly natural utterance.

The quality was, of course, not without its defects, the chief of which were an apparent detachment and a sort of fickleness, or want of persistence. It was probably the former of these which led several persons quite independently of each other to give Stevenson the name of "Sprite," a being exempt from the ordinary limitations of mankind, an Ariel free to wander through the realms of imagination, turning hither and thither as his fancies prompted him.

Of the abandonment of his inventions I have already spoken. "He was always full of schemes, and plans, and fancies," says Mr. Henley. "You left him hot on one, and the next time you saw him, you found to your distress (having gone all the way with him) that he had forgotten all about it."

Thus if he saw life on each of its many sides in turn with an intensity denied to a wider range of vision, he was liable at times to see it neither steadily nor whole. For the latter he was somewhat compensated by the fact that he saw so many aspects of it in rapid succession that he speedily corrected any narrowness of consideration, his nature further helping him in this—that he never saw it with any narrowness of temper.

Taken together with the kindliness of his nature it also, to a great extent, explains his extraordinary gift of sympathy. He seemed to divine from his own ex-

perience how other people felt, and how best they might be encouraged or consoled. I doubt if any one ever remained for long in his company either reticent or ill at ease. Mr. Gosse reminds us of Stevenson's talks at Sydney with a man formerly engaged in the "blackbirding" trade, who was with great difficulty induced to speak of his experiences. "He was very shy at first," said Stevenson, "and it was not till I told him of a good many of my escapades that I could get him to thaw, and then he poured it all out. I have always found *that* the best way of getting people to be confidential." We have seen with what success he approached the natives in this manner; in like fashion, no doubt, he inquired of Highlanders about the Appin murder.

But even where he had some set purpose in view, his talk seemed to be a natural and purely spontaneous outpouring of himself. It never seemed to me to be vanity—if it were, it was the most genial that ever existed—but rather a reference to instances within his own knowledge to illustrate the point in hand. He never monopolised the conversation, however eager he might be, but was faithful to his preference for talk which is in its nature a debate, "the amicable counter-assertion of personality," and "the Protean quality which is in man" enabled him, without ceasing to be himself, to meet the temper of his company.

With this multiplicity one might expect to find room in his character for many contradictory qualities or the presence in excess and defect of the very same virtues, and this in truth was so. To reconcile opposites was a task he thought of but little importance, and a fa-

vourite phrase with him was Whitman's: "Do I contradict myself? Very well, then I contradict myself." Consistency was a virtue for which it was easy to pay too high a price, and often it had to be surrendered for matters of greater import. Aspiration and humour, shrewdness and romance, profusion and self-denial, self-revelation and reserve, in him were curiously matched. On his frankness and his reticence I have already dwelt. He speaks of himself, as Professor Raleigh says,[1] "with no shadow of hypocrisy and no whiff or taint of indecent familiarity"; he tells you *everything*, as you think at first, and so simply and so frankly that it is only gradually you realise that he has not been revealing the things nearest his heart, that you learn no secrets of his home or his religion, nor of anything that was not for you to know. Self-denial, again, he showed in many ways; in his youth especially, when money was scarce with him, if any one had to go without, he was the first to surrender his claim and sacrifice himself. On the other hand, with "that virtue of frugality which is the armour of the artist" he was but ill-equipped.

Of his self-restraint in literature there can be no better instance than the very sparing use he makes of the pathetic. In the early essay on "Nurses" it is perhaps a trifle forced; there are hardly two more beautiful or dignified examples of it in English literature than in the essay on "Old Mortality," and the death of the fugitive French colonel in *St. Ives*. But it was only in conversation that one realised the extraordinary degree to

[1] *Robert Louis Stevenson*, by Walter Raleigh, p. 77. Edward Arnold, 1896.

which he possessed the power of moving the heart-strings. It was not that he made frequent or unmanly use of it, but being less upon his guard, the pathetic aspect of some person or incident would appeal to him, and in a moment he would have the least tender-hearted of his hearers hardly less deeply moved than himself. Ordinarily even in conversation he used it chiefly as a weapon of chivalry in defence of the neglected and the old; but as Swift "could write beautifully about a broomstick," so Stevenson one day described a chair, enlarging upon the hard lot of the legs that had to support the idle seat, until the boy to whom he was talking was almost in tears. On the other side must be set his description of "Home, Sweet Home" in *Across the Plains*, as "belonging to that class of art which may be best described as a brutal assault upon the feelings. Pathos must be redeemed by dignity of treatment. If you wallow naked in the pathetic, like the author of 'Home, Sweet Home,' you make your hearers weep in an unmanly fashion."

But the supreme instance of diverse elements in him was patience and its opposite. Never have I heard of any one in whom these contradictories were both shown in so high a degree. His endurance in illness and in work we have seen: no pain was too great to bear, no malady too long: he never murmured until it was over. No task was too irksome, no revision too exacting—laboriously, and like an eager apprentice, he went through with it to the end.

But on the other hand, when impatience came to the surface, it blazed up like the anger of a man who had never known a check. It was generally caused by

some breach of faith or act of dishonesty or unjustifiable delay. The only time I know of its being displayed in public was in a Paris restaurant, where Stevenson had ordered a change of wine, and the very bottle he had rejected was brought back to him with a different label. There was a sudden explosion of wrath; the bottle was violently broken; in an instant the restaurant was emptied, and—so much for long-suffering—the proprietor and his staff were devoting the whole of their attention and art to appease and reconcile the angry man.

Sternness and tenderness in him were very equally matched, though the former was kept mainly for himself and those nearest to him, of whom he asked nearly as much as of himself: tenderness, on the other hand, was for the failings of others. For like many chivalrous people, he expected but little of what he gave with so much freedom. His tenderness had something feminine, yet without lacking the peculiar strength that distinguishes it in a man. The Roman quality of sternness he so much admired came to himself, no doubt, with his Scottish blood. It is a virtue that for the most part requires exclusive dominion over a character for its proper display, and in Stevenson it had many rivals. But that it was genuine his appreciation of Lord Braxfield and his rendering of it in Lord Hermiston place beyond all doubt.[1]

Sternness and pity it is quite possible to harmonise, and the secret in Stevenson's case is perhaps solved in the following letter: "I wish you to read Taine's *Origines de la France Contemporaine* . . . and to try and

[1] Cf. *Vailima Letters*, p. 220.

understand what I have in my mind (ay, and in my heart!) when I preach law and police to you in season and out of season. What else do we care for, what else is anything but secondary, in that embroiled, confounded ravelment of politics, but to protect the old, and the weak, and the quiet, from that bloody wild beast that slumbers in man?

"True to my character, I have to preach. But just read the book. It is not absolutely fair, for Taine does not feel, with a warm heart, the touching side of their poor soul's illusions; he does not feel the infinite pathos of the Federations, poor pantomime and orgie, that (to its actors) seemed upon the very margin of heaven; nor the unspeakable, almost unthinkable tragedy of such a poor, virtuous, wooden-headed lot as the methodistic Jacobins. But he tells, as no one else, the dreadful end of sentimental politics."

To deal with Stevenson's intellectual qualities alone is to approach his less fascinating side, and to miss far more than half the influence of his charm. I have referred to his chivalry, only to find that in reality I was thinking of every one of the whole group of attributes which are associated with that name. Loyalty, honesty, generosity, courage; courtesy, tenderness, and self-devotion; to impute no unworthy motives and to bear no grudge; to bear misfortune with cheerfulness and without a murmur; to strike hard for the right and take no mean advantage; to be gentle to women and kind to all that are weak; to be very rigorous with oneself and very lenient to others—these, and any other virtues ever implied in "chivalry," were the traits that distinguished Stevenson. They do not make life easy,

as he frequently found. One day, his stepson tells me, they were sitting on the deck of a schooner in the Pacific, and Stevenson was reading a copy of *Don Quixote*. Suddenly he looked up, and, with an air of realisation, said sadly, as if to himself, "That 's me."

In spite of his knowledge of the world and his humour, and a vein of cynicism most difficult to define, many were his quixotries and many the windmills at which he tilted, less often wholly in vain than we thought who watched his errantry. The example remains; and

> "Would to-day, when Courtesy grows chill,
> And life's fine loyalties are turned to jest,
> Some fire of thine might burn within us still!
> Ah, would but one might lay his lance in rest,
> And charge in earnest — were it but a mill!"[1]

Of some of the virtues I have cited it would be superfluous to say more. There is no need to repeat how he faced death in the Riviera or bore the weariness of exile. But I may be pardoned if I dwell upon a few of the more striking instances in which he displayed his open-mindedness, his generosity of temper, his hatred of cruelty, and his readiness to forgive offences.

Generosity is a word in sore danger of being limited to the giving of money, but to Stevenson the quality must be attributed not only in this, but also in the widest possible application. It is a virtue that from its nature is easily abused: this did but make Stevenson think the more highly of it, and it can have no more splendid motto than his own aphorism, of which one version

[1] *At the Sign of the Lyre*, by Austin Dobson, p. 93.

runs: "The mean man doubted, Greatheart was deceived. 'Very well,' said Greatheart."

Of Stevenson's own generous temper there is no better illustration than a letter written in early days when he had been called to task for some words of depreciation.

"I think the crier-up has a good trade; but I like less and less every year the berth of runner-down; and I hate to see my friends in it. What is ——'s fault? That he runs down. What is the easiest thing to do? To run down. What is it that a strong man should scorn to do? To run down. And all this comes steeply home to me; for I am horrified to gather that I begin myself to fall into this same business which I abhor in others."

No one ever more eagerly welcomed the success of younger writers, entirely unknown to himself; but of this point the published letters are quite sufficient proof.

Any offence against himself he forgave readily, nor did he find it difficult to make excuses for almost any degree of misconduct on the part of others. There was only one action which I heard him say he could never pardon, and the exception was characteristic. The father of an acquaintance came to Edinburgh one day many years ago to render his son material assistance which he could ill afford. The pair met Stevenson, and the son, introducing his father, did not scruple to sneer at him behind his back. Stevenson's experience of life and of character was very wide; but he looked back on that gesture as the one really unpardonable offence he had ever known.

He could be angry enough and stern enough upon

occasion, but never was there any one so ready to melt at the least appeal to his compassion or mercy. In his political quarrels he found the greatest difficulty in keeping up an open breach with persons whom he liked in themselves, and for whom his sympathy was engaged, although he was convinced that they were ruining Samoa.[1] Truly he might say: "There was no man born with so little animosity as I."

But in fact the two kinds of generosity went frequently together. It is impossible for me to give the instances I know, but it is the fact that over and over again, no sooner had any one quarrelled with him, than Stevenson at once began to cast about for some means of doing his adversary a service, if only it could be done without divulging the source from whence it came.

In the narrower sense he was generous to a fault, but was ready to take any amount of personal trouble, and exercised judgment in his giving. When there was occasion he set no limit to his assistance. "Pray remember that if ever X—— should be in want of help, you are to strain my credit to breaking, and to mortgage all I possess or can expect, to help him." But in another case: "I hereby authorise you to pay when necessary £—— to Z——; if I gave him more, it would only lead to his starting a gig and a Pomeranian dog. I hope you won't think me hard about this. If you think the sum insufficient, you can communicate with me by return on the subject." Of course he received applications from all sorts of people on all manner of pretexts. There was one man who embarrassed him greatly by frequent letters. As far as could be

[1] *Vailima Letters*, p. 162.

gathered this person desired to abandon entirely the use of clothing, and coming to Samoa with "a woman I love," was there to gain his livelihood by whitewashing Stevenson's fences, which, by the way, consisted almost entirely of barbed wire. This individual even presented himself (but in the garb of civilisation) at Stevenson's hotel in Sydney; there, however, the line was drawn, and he was refused an interview.

But Stevenson's best service was often in the words with which he accompanied his gift. To his funeral only close personal friends were invited, but there appeared a tall gaunt stranger, whom nobody remembered to have seen before. He came up and apologised for his presence, and said he could not keep away, for Stevenson had saved him one day when he was at his lowest ebb. "I was wandering despondently along the road, and I met Mr. Stevenson, and I don't know whether it was my story, or that he saw I was a Scotchman, but he gave me twenty dollars and some good advice and encouragement. I took heart again, and I 'm getting on all right now, but if I had n't met Mr. Stevenson, and he had n't helped me, I should have killed myself that day." And the tears ran down his face.

Of Stevenson's open mind there could perhaps be no better proof than the passage in his last letter to R. A. M. Stevenson, written only two months before his death. If there was a class of men on this earth whom Louis loathed and placed beyond the pale of humanity, it was the dynamiters and anarchists; yet he could write of them in the following strain:—"There is a new something or other in the wind, which exercises

me hugely: anarchy,—I mean, anarchism. People who (for pity's sake) commit dastardly murders very basely, die like saints, and leave beautiful letters behind 'em (did you see Vaillant to his daughter? it was the New Testament over again); people whose conduct is inexplicable to me, and yet their spiritual life higher than that of most. This is just what the early Christians must have seemed to the Romans. . . . If they go on being martyred a few years more, the gross, dull, not unkindly bourgeois may get tired or ashamed or afraid of going on martyring; and the anarchists come out at the top just like the early Christians."

I have never met any one who hated cruelty of any kind with so lively a horror—I had almost said with so fanatical a detestation—from his earliest years.

"Do you remember telling me one day when I came in," wrote the Rev. Peter Rutherford, his tutor, to Mrs. Thomas Stevenson after her son's death, "how it was his eyes were so swollen: tear-swollen? You had found him in the study sobbing bitterly over a tale of cruelty he had been reading all alone." At the other end of his life I can remember his own impassioned account, given late one Sunday evening on his return from Apia, of how he had found a crowd of natives watching a dog-fight. He had plunged into their midst and stopped it, and turned to rebuke them. "But I found all my Samoan had clean gone out of my head, and all I could say to them was 'Pala'ai, Pala'ai!' ('Cowards, cowards!')." But the most characteristic of all his utterances was at Pitlochry in 1881, when he saw a dog being ill-treated. He at once interposed, and when the owner resented his interference and told him:

"It 's not your dog," he cried out: "It 's God's dog, and I 'm here to protect it."

At the same time it must be laid to the credit of his reason and the firm balance of his judgment that although vivisection was a subject he could not endure even to hear mentioned, yet, with all his imagination and sensibility, he never ranged himself among the opponents of this method of inquiry, provided, of course, it was limited, as in England, with the utmost rigour possible.

It is curious now to remember that an early critic of the *Travels with a Donkey* censured him severely for the treatment of Modestine as described by Stevenson himself. Yet woe betide either friend or stranger who appeared at Vailima on a horse with the sore back too common in the tropics: it was well for him if he did not have to return home on foot.

Irksome as ill-health was to Stevenson, it was yet the possible effect on his own character that he most dreaded, for he suspected that "being an invalid was a fatal objection to a human being," and his horror of valetudinarianism was due to its being "the worst training upon earth." He felt it hard that he should be judged by the same standard as men to whom the world was still "full of sea-bathing, and horse exercise, and bracing, manly virtues." Moreover, although he always reckoned his life "as a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded," he could not be altogether unconscious of the insecurity of his tenure. On one of those fragments of paper preserved by chance, on which he used to write down his remarks during the many periods when he was forbidden to speak,

these words occur: "You know the remarks of no doctor mean anything in my case. My case is a sport. I may die to-night or live till sixty." I can remember his saying to me in Samoa, "I have n't had a fair chance, I 've had to spend nearly all my life in expectation of death." The chief result with him perhaps was that he sat looser to life, and had grown altogether familiar with the idea of leaving it;[1] for in the words of Sir Thomas Browne: "He that so often surviveth his expectation lives many lives, and will hardly complain of the shortness of his days."

The question of Stevenson's ill-health brings one to the consideration which troubled him now and again in his later days: whether he had not after all made a mistake in adopting literature as his profession. With him, as with Scott, "to have done things worthy to be written was a dignity to which no man made any approach who had only written things worthy to be read." At times he thought with a passing regret of the life of action he had forsaken, and was struck by the irony that his father, who had opposed his choice of the profession of literature, had come to approve of it before he died, while he, whom nothing but that change of life would satisfy, had himself lived to doubt its wisdom.[2] But in these comparisons it was an ideal life that he contemplated, where he should be always well and always strong, doing his work in the open air. With such health and such conditions, his character and his powers might have attained to other heights; we should then have known a different man, less human and less endeared to us by the frailties of

[1] *Letters*, ii. 353. [2] *Ibid.*, 321.

our common nature. But the field on which he fought with sickness and depression was one in which most of us are at times engaged, and where many sufferers carry on a lifelong struggle. Anywhere his example would have been splendid; it could hardly have been more widely seen, or have better helped his fellowmen.

There was this about him, that he was the only man I have ever known who possessed charm in a high degree, whose character did not suffer from the possession. The gift comes naturally to women, and they are at their best in its exercise. But a man requires to be of a very sound fibre before he can be entirely himself and keep his heart single, if he carries about with him a talisman to obtain from all men and all women the object of his heart's desire. Both gifts Stevenson possessed, not only the magic but also the strength of character to which it was safely intrusted.

But who shall bring back that charm? Who shall unfold its secret? He was all that I have said: he was inexhaustible, he was brilliant, he was romantic, he was fiery, he was tender, he was brave, he was kind. With all this there went something more. He always liked the people he was with, and found the best and brightest that was in them; he entered into all the thoughts and moods of his companions, and led them along pleasant ways, or raised them to a courage and a gaiety like his own. If criticism or reminiscence has yielded any further elucidation of his spell, I do not know: it defies my analysis, nor have I ever heard it explained.

There linger on the lips of men a few names that

bring to us, as it were, a breeze blowing off the shores of youth. Most of those who have borne them were taken from the world before early promise could be fulfilled, and so they rank in our regard by virtue of their possibilities alone. Stevenson is among the fewer still who bear the award both of promise and of achievement, and is happier yet in this: besides admiration and hope, he has raised within the hearts of his readers a personal feeling towards himself which is nothing less deep than love.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ADDRESS TO THE SAMOAN STUDENTS AT MALUA, JANUARY, 1890

You are the hope of your race. You stand in a position of so much privilege and so much responsibility, that I myself feel it a privilege and a responsibility to address you. What your race is to become in the future, *that* you carry in your hands: the father and the mother carry and feed the little child; yet a little, and the child learns to walk, and to look for and to plant for itself; yet a little longer still, and he is carrying and teaching, and feeding and teaching new young ones. So it is with the generations in a family. So in a far wider sense with them in a country and a race.

You, gentlemen, are now learning to walk: very soon at the swift pace of years—the fast runners—you will be called upon to teach in your turn. And while all are called upon first to learn and then to teach, you are so called particularly; you have been chosen and set apart; you are the elect Levites: you are called upon in a few years to be the fathers and guides of your race: according as you do well, so may your country with God's blessing flourish; according as you do ill, so will it certainly decline.

First, to Learn

I was in an island not very far from here where they are trying to teach them French, for the Government is a French Government: show any of the young men some written French, and they would read it out aloud with a good pronunciation, never stumbling; ask any of them what it meant, and they held their peace; they did not understand one word: they read as parrots speak. Now we may not be quite as stupid as the Marquesans, and yet we may be no better at all.

We may learn a great deal about religion, yet not learn religion. We may know a thousand texts, and get no sense from them, as a blind man might have a thousand lanterns and yet see no better. The meaning of religion is a rule of life; it is an obligation to do well; if

that rule, that obligation, is not seen, your thousand texts will be to you like the thousand lanterns to the blind man. As he goes about the house in the night of his blindness, he will only break the glass and burn his feet and fingers: and so you, as you go through life in the night of your ignorance, will only break and hurt yourselves on broken laws.

Before Christ came, the Jewish religion had forbidden many evil things; it was a religion that a man could fulfil, I had almost said, in idleness; all he had to do was to pray and to sing psalms, and to refrain from things forbidden. Do not deceive yourselves; when Christ came, all was changed. The injunction was then laid upon us not to refrain from doing, but to do. At the last day he is to ask us not what sins we have avoided, but what righteousness we have done, what we have done for others, how we have helped good and hindered evil: what difference has it made to this world, and to our country and our family and our friends, that we have lived. The man who has been only pious and not useful will stand with a long face on that great day, when Christ puts to him his questions.

But this is not all that we must learn: we must beware everywhere of the letter that kills, seek everywhere for the spirit that makes glad and strong. For example, these questions that we have just read are again only the letter. We must study what they mean, not what they are. We are told to visit them that are in prison. A good thing, but it were better if we could save them going there. We are told to visit the sick; it were better still, and we should so better have fulfilled the law, if we could have saved some of them from falling sick. In considering the passage, you are to bear in mind it was addressed to men poor, without consideration, without authority; these particular questions are but illustrations of the law, and they are the illustrations best suited to the case of the disciples; had Christ been addressing you who are already chosen out to be the guides and teachers of a generation throughout all these islands, be sure the illustrations would have been different. The law, the spirit, would be the same; the questions, the illustrations, the letter would have been quite other. The best the disciples could hope to do was to comfort and heal the sick and the prisoners, but you can do more. If you think you cannot, if you confine yourself to the letter here, I see the blind man stumbling among useless lanterns, and I look to hear him cry when he shall have burned his fingers.

Your case is apart. You have to help: you have to protect your race and your country. It will not do for you to visit the sick; you must teach your countrymen to avoid those things that bring sickness. It will not be enough for you to comfort the prisoner; it will be for you to see that none go to prison unjustly, and that of those who go there justly, none shall have gone through your default. It will be for you, in particular, to see that your whole race does not fall sick and die; that your whole race does not go into a prison which shall never open.

For these are the dangers. You have yet been spared the visitation of the worst sicknesses: when these come there will be a fresh test of your teaching. Will you by that time have made your race wise enough and obedient enough to take the necessary care? Will you have made them brave enough to bear the horror, the bereavement, the darkness of that time? Ah, gentlemen, if so, you will have played a brave part; you will have fought a good fight. If not, what will you have done for the people put into your hands, even like a child, and whom you have not taught to walk?

Again there is another danger: the loss of your land to foreigners. It is good to make laws, and good to keep them; but let us remember that a law in itself is but a form of words, as the mark of a *tapui* [taboo] was only a branch of cocoanut or a piece of mulberry bark. What makes either strong is something in the heart of the people. It will depend upon you to put it and keep it there. And to do so will be better than to visit the law-breakers in prison.

And again. It will be very difficult to keep this law about the land, unless you help.

Yet another way. Trouble comes upon your people; and it is a trouble like death, that must come, and for which you must be prepared. The world is very full of men, many of them starving; in these crowded lands, men have learned to work desperately hard; with all their hard work, they are still too many of them in their own place; they flow like water out of a full bucket, and they come, they must come, they have begun to come to your islands. Then the fight will befall, it has begun already; it is a true fight, although swords are not drawn nor guns fired, for men's lives and men's deaths are on the issue.

Now I will say to you plainly, if you cannot get your own people

to be a little more industrious, to make a little money, and to save a little money, you may make all the good laws on earth, still your lands will be sold; when your land is sold, your race will die, and in these islands, where your children might have lived for a hundred centuries, another race will sit, and they will ask themselves — What were the Samoans? and only find word of you in ancient books. It is for the king to make the laws; it is for you to make the people industrious and saving; which if you do, the laws will be kept; which if you do not, they shall certainly be broken, and your race finish. And when the traveller comes here perhaps in no such long time, and looks in vain, and asks for the Samoans, and they tell him all are dead; and he, wondering at the judgment, cries out, "Where was the fault?" and we shall say: "They taught young men in Malua, and it was thought that these would teach the people, and they failed; and now the wind blows and the rain falls where their roofs once stood, and where their fires once burned."

Perhaps you think I lay a heavy charge on you: it is not I that lay it, but the Master you profess to serve. Or that I ask of you a miracle: it is not a miracle, for it has been partly done in another place. In Tahiti I could not see the people were at all hard worked; the people in my own country work far harder; yet they work hard enough. In a village where I lived long, many had fine European houses, and more were building; many had money laid aside, none had sold his land. What has been done in Tahiti, cannot that be done in Samoa? I think it can, and I know the duty lies on you.

Second, to Teach

The learning part, to learn the spirit of your Master, the helpfulness to others which he lays down, and to learn his spirit, can best be applied in your own isle to your own race; the learning part done, you have to Teach. Upon this I will say only two things.

There was once (or so they tell) a false prophet in Asia who came with a cloth on his face. No man, he said, might look upon his face and live, it was (like Moses') so bright with the effulgence of God's spirit; and many disciples and an army gathered about the prophet with the cloth. And one fine day the cloth was rent, and behold an old, bald, hideous creature from whom all men shrank; his friends fled from

the tent screaming, his armies fled from their encampment, and in one day his power was fallen.

I am here and speak to you—good words I think, honest words I am very sure — to-morrow I am gone again, and you cannot tell what manner of man I am: whether good or bad, whether I do what I teach, or whether I disgrace my teaching by my conduct. I am the prophet with the cloth before my face. But you, who are to dwell with your fellow-countrymen, every day will make another hole in the cloth that covers you, and you may be still talking and teaching the bravest lessons, and prating perhaps of the brightness of your countenance, but all the while your hearers see you as you are, and some run screaming and some laugh aloud.

No man can do as well as he teaches. For we are all like St. Paul in this, that we see better things than we are able to attain to; we cannot therefore hope to be seen doing what we teach, but we must be seen trying to do it: we shall even only teach it well, in so far as we are trying hard. The man who only talks, I pledge you my word, he will not even do the talking well. This is as much as to say, that if you are going to save your island and your race you must all make up your hearts constantly to a life of hard toil in the eyes of your disciples. That is the example you must set. You may think this is a hard thing. But did you suppose there is any way in life which a man is allowed not to be a hero? You pastors do not go to war; you must be braver-hearted, then, at home. The world has no room for cowards. We must all be ready somehow to toil, to suffer, to die. And yours is not the less noble because no drum beats before you, when you go out into your daily battlefields; and no crowds shout about your coming, when you return from your daily victory or defeat.

I am afraid I wish you to be very stern with yourselves, and that brings me to my last point. How are you to be stern to others? There is love, and there is justice. Justice is for oneself: love for others. It did not require any gospel to teach a man to love himself or to be stern to his neighbours, and the gospel was, in fact, the opposite. Yet there is one thing here in Samoa that I think you will have to fight very hard; or all the toil and the frugality in the world will never make your islands strong enough and rich enough to stand. If I were speaking at home in my own country, I would tell people to be

more generous; and it would be the givers and the lenders I would be addressing. I want to ask your countrymen to be more generous too; but I want you to say this to the askers. You will get men to work with difficulty if those that do not work come down like locusts and devour the harvest. For the defence of the workers, you must get these beggars ashamed of themselves, or you must make them so ridiculous in the eyes of others that they shall not dare to come besieging people's houses.

To them I am afraid you must be a little stern, for they lie right in the way that leads to safety for your islands and your race; they are a disease that must be cured; they are a new plague of Egypt.

But to sinners, and to them that fail, and to those that grow weary in well-doing, you must remember rather to be long-suffering: show them the better way, and keep your anger for yourselves when you shall fail to show it. A brawling pastor is the next worse thing to an idle one.

APPENDIX B

MISSIONS IN THE SOUTH SEAS

An Address read[1] before the Women's Missionary Association and members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, at Sydney, March 18, 1893.

I SUPPOSE I am in the position of many other persons. I had conceived a great prejudice against Missions in the South Seas, and I had no sooner come there than that prejudice was at first reduced, and then at last annihilated. Those who deblaterate against missions have only one thing to do, to come and see them on the spot. They will see a great deal of good done; they will see a race being forwarded in many different directions, and I believe, if they be honest persons, they will cease to complain of mission work and its effects. At the same time, and infallibly in all sublunary matters, they will see a great deal of harm done. I am very glad to think that the new class of missionaries are by no means so radical as their predecessors. I have spoken to many missionaries, and I have the pleasure to say that the most intelligent among them are of one opinion and that the true one. They incline to think that it is best to proceed by little and little, and not by much and much. They are inclined to spare so far as it is possible native opinions and set native habits of morality; to seek rather the point of agreement than the points of difference; to proceed rather by confirmation and extension than by iconoclasm. I wish I could say how strongly I feel the importance and efficiency of this new view. People have learned one code of decency from their childhood up. They are prepared to suffer, in some cases to die, for that. There is here a vast reservoir of moral power. It is the business of the missionary not to destroy, but to utilise it. When the missionaries — the earlier missionaries — "broke the tabus" in the South Sea Islands, they chose the path of destruction, not of utilisation, and I am pleased

[1] Stevenson was unable to be present at the meeting, but the proofs of this article were revised by him for the Sydney *Presbyterian*.

to think that these days are over, that no missionary will go among a primitive people with the idea of mere revolution, that he will rather develop that which is good, or is capable of being made good, in the inherent ideas of the race, that when he finds an idea half bad and half good, he will apply himself to the good half of it, develop that, and seek to minimise and gradually obliterate the other, thus saving what I may be allowed to call the moral water-power. Because we are, one and all, in every rank of life, and in every race of mankind, the children of our fathers, we shall never do well, we shall certainly never do nobly, except upon the lines marked out for us by our fathers' footprints.

And the true art of the missionary, as it seems to me — an outsider, the most lay of laymen, and for that reason, on the old principle that the bystander sees most of the game, perhaps more than usually well able to judge — is to profit by the great — I ought really to say the vast — amount of moral force reservoired in every race, and to expand and to change and to fit that power to new ideas and to new possibilities of advancement.

I am saying only that which I have learned from my intercourse with the most experienced of missionaries, though it commends itself to me upon more primitive and abstract grounds. What I have still to say is perhaps more personal to myself as an observer.

We make a great blunder when we expect people to give up in a moment the whole beliefs of ages, the whole morals of the family, sanctified by the traditions of the heart, and not to lose something essential. We make a still greater — or I should say, too many missionaries make a mistake still greater — when they expect, not only from their native converts, but from white men (by no means of the highest class) shipwrecked or stranded at random on these islands, a standard of conduct which no parish minister in the world would dare to expect of his parishioners and church members.

There is here in these despised whites a second reservoir of moral power, which missionaries too often neglect and render nugatory. Many of these despised traders are in themselves fairly decent and more than fairly decent persons. They dwell, besides, permanently amidst the native population, whereas the missionary is in some cases, and perhaps too often, only there upon a flying visit. The trader is therefore, at once by experience and by influence, the superior of the

missionary. He is a person marked out to be made use of by the intelligent missionary. Sometimes a very doubtful character, sometimes a very decent old gentleman, he will almost invariably be made the better by some intelligent and kindly attention for which he is often burning; and he will almost invariably be made the worse by neglect or by insult.

And I am sorry to say that in too many cases I have found these methods to be followed by the missionary. I know very well that, in part from the misdeeds of the worst kind of traders, and in part by the harshness of otherwise excellent missionaries, this quarrel has become envenomed. Well, it is just this quarrel that has to be eliminated. By long-suffering, by kindness, by a careful distinction of personalities, the mission and the traders have to be made more or less in unison. It is doubtful if the traders will change much; it is perhaps permissible in the layman to suggest that the mission might change somewhat. The missionary is a great and a beneficent factor. He is hampered, he is restricted, his work is largely negated by the attitude of his fellow-whites, his fellow-countrymen, and his fellow-Christians in the same island. Difficult as the case may be — and all mission work is eminently difficult — the business which appears to me to be before the missions is that of making their peace; and I will say much more — of raising up a brigade of half and half, or if that cannot be, of quarter and quarter lay supporters among the whites.

If I had not been asked, I should have been the last man in the world to have interjected my lay opinions into your councils. Having been asked, I willingly lay myself open to your censures, and confidently appeal for your indulgence, while I tell you exactly how this matter has seemed to a far from uninterested layman, well acquainted with the greater part of the South Seas.

APPENDIX C

VAILIMA PRAYERS

For Success

Lord, behold our family here assembled. We thank Thee for this place in which we dwell; for the love that unites us; for the peace accorded us this day; for the hope with which we expect the morrow; for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies that make our lives delightful; for our friends in all parts of the earth, and our friendly helpers in this foreign isle. Let peace abound in our small company. Purge out of every heart the lurking grudge. Give us grace and strength to forbear and to persevere. Offenders, give us the grace to accept and to forgive offences. Forgetful ourselves, help us to bear cheerfully the forgetfulness of others. Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind. Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies. Bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent endeavours. If it may not, give us strength to encounter that which is to come, that we be brave in peril, constant in tribulation, temperate in wrath, and in all changes of fortune, and down to the gates of death, loyal and loving one to another. As the clay to the potter, as the windmill to the wind, as children of their sire, we beseech of Thee this help and mercy for Christ's sake.

For Grace

Grant that we here before Thee may be set free from the fear of vicissitude and the fear of death, may finish what remains before us of our course without dishonour to ourselves or hurt to others, and when the day comes, may die in peace. Deliver us from fear and favour, from mean hopes and from cheap pleasures. Have mercy on each in his deficiency; let him be not cast down; support the stumbler on the way, and give at last rest to the weary.

At Morning

The day returns and brings us the petty round of irritating concerns and duties. Help us to play the man, help us to perform them with

laughter and kind faces, let cheerfulness abound with industry, let our laughter rise like a . Give us to go blithely on our business all this day, bring us to our resting beds weary and content and undishonoured, and grant us in the end the gift of sleep.

Evening

We come before Thee, O Lord, in the end of Thy day with thanksgiving. Remember and relieve, we beseech Thee, those who are in pain, remember sick children, visit the fathers of destitute families, shine in the house of affliction. Our beloved in the far parts of the earth, those who are now beginning the labours of the day what time we end them, and those with whom the sun now stands at the point of noon, bless, help, console and prosper them.

Our guard is relieved, the service of the day is over, and the hour come to rest. We resign into Thy hands our sleeping bodies, our cold hearths and open doors. Give us to awake with smiles, give us to labour smiling. As the sun returns in the east, so let our patience be renewed with dawn; as the sun lightens the world, so let our loving-kindness make bright this house of our habitation.

Another for Evening

Lord, receive our supplications for this house, family, and country. Protect the innocent, restrain the greedy and the treacherous, lead us out of our tribulation into a quiet land.

Look down upon ourselves and our absent dear ones. Help us and them; prolong our days in peace and honour. Give us health, food, bright weather, and light hearts. In what we meditate of evil, frustrate our will; in what of good, further our endeavours. Cause injuries to be forgot and benefits to be remembered. Let us lie down without fear, and awake and arise with exultation. For His sake, in whose words we now conclude.

In the Season of Rain

We thank Thee, Lord, for the glory of the late days and the excellent face of Thy sun. We thank Thee for good news received. We thank Thee for the pleasures we have enjoyed and for those we have

been able to confer. And now, when the clouds gather and the rain impends over the forest and our house, permit us not to be cast down; let us not lose the savour of past mercies and past pleasures; but, like the voice of a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memory survive in the hour of darkness. If there be in front of us any painful duty, strengthen us with the grace of courage; if any act of mercy, teach us tenderness and patience.

Another

Lord, Thou sendest down rain upon the uncounted millions of the forest, and givest the trees to drink exceedingly. We are here upon this isle a few handfuls of men, and how many myriads upon myriads of stalwart trees! Teach us the lesson of the trees. The sea around us, which this rain recruits, teems with the race of fish; teach us, Lord, the meaning of the fishes. Let us see ourselves for what we are, one out of the countless number of the clans of Thy handiwork. When we would despair, let us remember that these also please and serve Thee.

Before a Temporary Separation

To-day we go forth separate, some of us to pleasure, some of us to worship, some upon duty. Go with us, our guide and angel; hold Thou before us in our divided paths the mark of our low calling, still to be true to what small best we can attain to. Help us in that, our Maker, the dispenser of events, Thou, of the vast designs in which we blindly labour, suffer us to be so far constant to ourselves and our beloved.

For Friends

For our absent loved ones we implore Thy loving-kindness. Keep them in life, keep them in growing honour; and for us, grant that we remain worthy of their love. For Christ's sake, let not our beloved blush for us, nor we for them. Grant us but that, and grant us courage to endure lesser ills unshaken, and to accept death, loss, and disappointment as it were straws upon the tide of life.

For the Family

Aid us, if it be Thy will, in our concerns. Have mercy on this land and innocent people. Help them who this day contend in disappoint-

ment with their frailties. Bless our family, bless our forest house, bless our island helpers. Thou who hast made for us this place of ease and hope, accept and inflame our gratitude; help us to repay in service one to another the debt of Thine unmerited benefits and mercies, so that when the period of our stewardship draws to a conclusion, when the windows begin to be darkened, when the bond of the family is to be loosed, there shall be no bitterness of remorse in our farewells.

Help us to look back on the long way that Thou hast brought us, on the long days in which we have been served not according to our deserts but our desires; on the pit and the miry clay, the blackness of despair, the horror of misconduct, from which our feet have been plucked out. For our sins forgiven or prevented, for our shame unpublished, we bless and thank Thee, O God. Help us yet again and ever. So order events, so corroborate our frailty, as that day by day we shall come before Thee with this song of gratitude, and in the end we be dismissed with honour. In their weakness and their fear the vessels of Thy handiwork so pray to Thee, so praise Thee. Amen.

Sunday

We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favour, folk of many families and nations gathered together in the peace of this roof, weak men and women subsisting under the covert of Thy patience. Be patient still; suffer us yet awhile longer; — with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavours against evil, suffer us awhile longer to endure, and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us to play the man under affliction. Be with our friends, be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest; if any dream, be their dreams quiet; if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns, return to us, our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts — eager to labour — eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion — and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it.

We thank Thee and praise Thee; and in the words of Him to whom this day is sacred, close our oblation.

Lord, enlighten us to see the beam that is in our own eye, and blind us to the mote that is in our brother's. Let us feel our offences with

our hands, make them great and bright before us like the sun, make us eat and drink them for our diet. Blind us to the offences of our beloved, cleanse them from our memories, take them out of our mouths for ever. Let all here before Thee carry and measure with the false balances of love, and be in their own eyes and in all conjunctions the most guilty. Help us, at the same time, with the grace of courage, that we be none of us cast down. When we sit lamenting amid the ruins of our happiness or our integrity, touch us with fire from the altar, that we may be up and doing to rebuild our city : in the name and by the method of Him in whose words we now conclude.

Lord, the creatures of Thy hand, Thy disinherited children, come before Thee with their incoherent wishes and regrets. Children we are, children we shall be, till our mother the earth has fed upon our bones. Accept us, correct us, guide us, Thy guilty innocents. Dry our vain tears, delete our vain resentments, help our yet vainer efforts. If there be any here, sulking as children will, deal with and enlighten him. Make it day about that person, so that he shall see himself and be ashamed. Make it heaven about him, Lord, by the only way to heaven, forgetfulness of self. And make it day about his neighbours, so that they shall help, not hinder him.

We are evil, O God, and help us to see it and amend. We are good, and help us to be better. Look down upon Thy servants with a patient eye, even as Thou sendest sun and rain; look down, call upon the dry bones, quicken, enliven; re-create in us the soul of service, the spirit of peace; renew in us the sense of joy.

APPENDIX D

Samoan Affairs

It is obvious that if the Berlin Treaty were to prove a success, the two chief officials appointed under its provisions should have been men of the world, conversant with ordinary business, perfectly straightforward, accustomed to criticism, free from red tape, prompt to act, ready to conciliate, and willing to undertake responsibility. Moreover, they should have been sent out to their posts as soon as the news of their appointment reached Samoa.

The following note will show that none of these conditions were fulfilled. I take my facts (with one single exception) from the reports of the British Consul and the American Consul-General, for after several efforts I have failed to procure a copy of the German White-book for use in writing these pages. I read it when it came out, and would refer to the leading article in the *Times* for January 17th, 1893, to show that it directly supported Stevenson's contentions. But it would be useless to refer my readers to an authority so inaccessible. The American White-book is likewise not easily obtained, and I have principally quoted the British Blue-book, C 6973, which may be purchased by any one for the sum of two shillings from Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode, 32 Abingdon Street, London, S.W. As to the impartiality of the Blue-book, the British Consul during this period was never at any time suspected, justly or unjustly, of being friendly to Stevenson.

The actual facts are as follows:—The Treaty was signed at Berlin on July 14th, 1889: the President did not reach Apia till 26th April, 1891 (Letter No. 85), and though the Chief-Justice arrived in the end of December, 1890 (No. 61), he did not open his court for hearing cases till the 15th of July in the following year (120).

The Chief-Justice from the beginning refused to pay any customs or other duties as a private individual (125); he delayed the proceedings of the Land Commission, by disclaiming all authority to give the necessary formal sanction to their appointment of a secretary, and the hire of a safe for the custody of the numerous title-deeds produced be-

fore their court (97); he appointed two Swedes to the only two offices in his patronage, and procured or created two more posts which they held simultaneously with the others (73, 239); and he refused to register any land-titles until a heavy fee had been paid to his Registrar — a stroke by which that officer, in addition to his salary, would within a couple of years have pocketed £3000 (239, 305). Then, when troubles were beginning, he started on September 5th, 1891, on an expedition of several months' duration to study the land systems of Fiji and Victoria (123, 179).

The President for his part chose as the first work of the new Government a large prison, on which £1500, being half the sum collected by the Government up to the time of his proposal, was expended (127), and which, when finished, was not used (278). At the same time he issued an advertisement calling for tenders for "Capitol Buildings," "which proved to be mainly a dwelling-house for Baron Senfft von Pilsach" (127), a residence for which it is fair to add that he duly paid rent.

On September 4th, 1891, five Samoan chiefs, who had surrendered voluntarily to a political charge of having destroyed some houses on the island of Manono, were, no doubt with complete justice, condemned to six months' imprisonment by a native judge, just before the Chief-Justice left for his colonial studies. Two days later, on rumour of an attempt to rescue the men, the Swedish jailor, acting presumably on instructions, placed dynamite under the prison, connected the charge with an electric battery, and threatened to blow the whole of the prisoners sky-high, if any such attempt were made.[1]

Yet two days later, there having been no sign of trouble, the king,

[1] This is the only statement unsupported by any of the official publications, but it was made deliberately by Stevenson upon the information received by him at the time and on the spot; the three Powers publish not one single word of denial or incredulity, and when the Government editor tried to meet the accusation, he did not for a moment question the fact, but endeavoured to explain it away. (The *Times*, 11th January, 1893.)

If the charge were untrue, it would have been denied with indignation in two lines. If it were admitted to be true, what could be said? Let us take a recent analogy: what *would* have been said if dynamite had been placed under the huts at Nooitgedacht or St. Helena, where the prisoners were prisoners of war, or under the Tombs or Holloway Jail?

with the assent of the British Consul, and acting presumably under the direction of his official adviser, altered the sentence and deported the five chiefs to an island entirely out of his jurisdiction three hundred miles away.[1]

Up to the middle of March, 1892, the Customs dues of Apia had been appropriated without question to the Municipality, which had been administering its income with the full consent of its chairman, the President, who regularly published its accounts (213, encl. 4). Suddenly, without a word of warning, the President made an entirely secret reference to the Chief-Justice, who thereupon, without giving any notice to the persons most interested, or any opportunity for arguing the question before him, made an official declaration that the whole of these dues, past, present, and future, belonged to the Samoan Treasury, and that the Municipality was bound to refund the arrears. The Council was thus rendered bankrupt, and its future revenue reduced to £1600 a year, on which the President's own salary of £1000 was a first charge. The income of the Chief-Justice was paid by the Samoan Treasury, which had been nearly empty until it received this accession of £5000 (188, 213, encl. 1).

It was to do them little good. On the strength of this windfall the President (263) proceeded with the utmost secrecy to buy up the local newspaper! For this he paid £650 in cash, entered the purchase as a "special investment ordered by the king" (306), and suppressed the fact as long as possible. The Government advertisements had hitherto been the mainstay of the paper, which had nevertheless maintained a creditable independence. Four months later the Government started at additional cost a *Royal Gazette*, which henceforth contained the advertisements given formerly to their own newspaper, "thereby reducing the selling value of the *Samoa Times* from £650 to about £200." By this time the Samoan Government, which could collect few or no native taxes, was almost bankrupt again (263). A rival paper was naturally started in a few months, still further reducing the value of the *Samoa Times*, which, within a couple of years, wholly emancipated itself from Government influence.

Meanwhile the sanitation, lighting, policing, road-making, and all

[1] American White-book, p. 104. The British Blue-book does not refer to the incident of the prisoners at all.

necessary works of the Municipality were at a standstill (213), and the monthly service of mail-steamers, on which the prosperity of the place largely depended, was seriously imperilled by a refusal to give the company more than half the very moderate subsidy for which it asked (263). And as far as the natives were concerned, the Government, to all intents and purposes, was non-existent.

It is mere weariness to add that the President, having combined the funds of the Government and of the Municipality, and lodged the balance in his own name in a bank in Sydney, denied the right of either the Samoan Government or the Municipality to interfere, on the ground that the whole sum belonged to neither one of them, nor would he allow the auditors of the Municipal accounts to verify the Municipal balance (265, encl. 1). "The Berlin Act," he said, "contained certain provisions adapted to the purpose of securing the selection of conscientious persons to my office" (243).

These facts, I must repeat, are not drawn from any statement of Stevenson; they are not due to any imagination of my own: they are taken from the matter-of-fact reports of the Consuls, who forwarded them to their Governments as material for negotiations between the Great Powers concerned. There are many ridiculous details I have omitted, there are many other disputes on all sorts of petty questions. But into these and the other charges contained in the letters to the *Times* it is unnecessary to go; they require more explanation, they would be more tedious to narrate, they are equally futile, more ridiculous it is hardly possible for them to be.

The criticism with which Stevenson summed up one of these gentlemen might equally be applied to the other. "Such an official I never remember to have read of, though I have seen the like from across the footlights and the orchestra, evolving in similar figures to the strains of Offenbach."

As to the question of Stevenson's deportation, which occurs occasionally in his letters, and was at one time constantly present before his eyes, he firmly believed what is probably the truth — that it had been demanded by Chief-Justice Cedercrantz and President von Pilsach on account of his letters to the *Times*, and that the captains of various ships, having been sounded upon the subject, had refused their co-operation. The only fact which is quite certain is that the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific, the Governor of Fiji, issued on

December 29th, 1892, a notice entitled "The Sedition (Samoa) Regulation, 1892," which rendered any British subject guilty of "sedition" against the "Government of Samoa" liable, on conviction, to imprisonment for not more than three months. It placed the right of defining the words "Government of Samoa" in the hands of the British Consul at Apia, and explicitly included in the word "sedition" "all practices, whether by word, deed, or writing, having for their object to bring about in Samoa discontent or dissatisfaction, public disturbance, civil war, hatred or contempt toward the King or Government of Samoa, or the laws or constitution of the country, and generally to promote disorder in Samoa."

At the time of its publication, no British subject had, so far as is known, been guilty of fomenting sedition in Samoa, and if it were necessary to find a pretext for putting it in force, Stevenson's letters to the *Times* were the only existing printed utterance which would have fallen within the sweep even of that all-embracing net.

Had the Regulation been put in force generally, it would probably have resulted in the imprisonment of the entire British population of Apia, for there was none so poor as not to hold up to contempt that pitiable Government; had it been put in force against Stevenson, there was obviously no jail in Samoa fit to receive him (certainly not the President's new prison), and he must have been deported to Fiji or the Colonies. But as soon as the first copy of this document reached the Colonial Office in Downing Street, and even before a question could be asked in Parliament, it was amended by Lord Ripon into something more in conformity with the usual rights of British subjects. Its teeth having been drawn, the Regulation dragged out an idle existence, and I believe that nobody was ever punished under its provisions.

The High Commissioner had neither visited Samoa himself during the term of Stevenson's residence, nor sent any other officer there from outside; this Regulation must therefore have been issued either with the approval of the British Consul (who was the local Deputy Commissioner), or else without inquiry from, or the approval of, any British official on the spot having cognisance of the facts, and upon the bare

[1] Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, Fourth Series, vol. x. pp. 1596, 1710.

word of the President and the Chief-Justice. But it is hardly to be wondered at that Stevenson, after this, was confirmed in his distrust of the British Consul, and never applied to him in any matter, except where he was the necessary and only possible channel of negotiations.

It may be convenient to summarise briefly the whole course of native affairs during Stevenson's residence.

Malietoa Laupepa, the King of Samoa, having been deported by the Germans in 1887, the high-chief Tamasese was then set up in his stead, but his pretensions were opposed by the greater part of the Samoan people under the leadership of the high-chief Mataafa. The Berlin Treaty was signed, and Laupepa was reinstated on the throne in 1889. But after a time jealousy arose between the two leaders; Mataafa retired to the village of Malie (which has the right to confer the title of Malietoa when vacant), and he there remained for two years, committing no overt act of hostility, but gradually drifting towards a state of rebellion. In July, 1893, a fight was precipitated between his men and the royal forces, in which the latter were victorious. The losers fled to the island of Manono, where a few days later they surrendered to the men-of-war of Great Britain and Germany. Mataafa and a dozen of his chiefs were deported, first to the Tokelaus and then to Jaluit; others were imprisoned in Samoa, and fines were inflicted. In 1894 young Tamasese (whose father was dead) fomented trouble against the king. There was some fighting between the two parties along the coast, the royalists being aided as far as possible by the guns of the men-of-war. Peace was patched up, some old rifles were confiscated, and nobody was really punished.

Besides the matters mentioned in his letters to the English papers, Stevenson's only interference in politics was in the following cases:—

He was once voted to the chair at a public meeting in Apia, and signed and forwarded to the President the resolutions then passed. He made two attempts to bring about an interview and reconciliation between the king and Mataafa, and this, had it been successful, might have laid the foundation for a lasting peace. But Malietoa was held back, and it came to nothing. Stevenson paid three visits, and three only, to Mataafa, when that chief had retired to the village of Malie as a rebel *in posse*. He also twice went within his outposts a fortnight

before the fighting of 1893, but neither saw nor tried to see the chief, who was miles away, nor did he have any serious conversation with anybody upon those occasions. A month afterwards he sent him a letter by the hands of the British Consul.

Apart from these occasions, almost too trivial to mention, Stevenson, to the certain knowledge of his wife, Mr. Osbourne, and myself, took no action whatever.

APPENDIX E

Much has been said of the pains taken by Stevenson, and of the number of times he wrote and rewrote his work, until it satisfied him. It may be interesting to compare four drafts of the beginning of his last and greatest novel — *Weir of Hermiston*. There is none but internal evidence of the date or order of the first three of these versions. The story, however, was begun in October, 1892, resumed in the summer of 1893, and taken up for the last time in September, 1894. To the notes given by Mr. Colvin there may be added the fact that, as early as 1869, Stevenson had written a rough unfinished ballad of a girl meeting her outlawed lover at the Cauldstaneslap, from which the poem was to take its name.

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH LORD HERMISTON IS WIDOWED

When the Court rose, and the family ~~came back~~ returned to Hermiston, it was a common remark that the lady was sore failed. She had been always what you would call an elderly body: there was no blood of youth in the woman, ~~nothing but piety and anxiety.~~ ~~and little that was efficient~~ Her house in George Square (people said) was exceedingly ill-guided; nothing answerable to the expense of maintenance except the cellar, and that was my lord's own concern and a place always to be mentioned with respect. When things went wrong, as they continually did, "Keep me!" she would cry, with a little fluttering way she had, and clasp her hands. As for my lord, he would look down the table at her with his "hanging face," as they call it in the Parliament House. "I think ye must have given over to the Grumbletonians, Mrs. Weir," he would say; "I think these broth would be better to sweem in than to sup."

no grasp or force, nothing but piety and anxiety: a mixture of the hen, the angel, and the mouse, with perhaps most of the hen, she fled through life with a sound of whimpering and psalms.

APPENDIX E

CHAPTER I

When the Court rose in the year one, and the family returned to Hermiston, it was a common remark in all that part of the country, that the lady was sore failed. She was known there, ~~in that~~ from a child; and her folk before her, the old "Riding Rutherfords of Hermiston," of whom she was the last, ~~the men~~ had been famous of yore, ill husbands to their wives in the country; ~~ill husbands to their wives, and famous~~ ill neighbours; their exploits, now that they were happily ended, had begun to be recalled with complaisance, and to make ~~made~~ a part of the local legend ~~mythology~~; and ~~people saw with~~ it was with a sense of the instability and the decay of things, that men beheld the high ~~handed~~ and heavy-handed race die out in the incongruous person of their last descendant. She had not been wholly without charm at first; neighbours recalled in her, as a child, a strain of elfin wilfulness ~~gaiety~~, gentle little mutinies, sad little gaieties, even a promise of frail beauty that was not to be fulfilled. In the long generations past, while a male Rutherford was riding at the head of his spears or tossing pots and brawling in taverns, there had always been a whitefaced and silent wife immured at home in the old peel or the later mansion-house.

CHAPTER I

The Lord Justice-Clerk was a stranger in that part of the country; but his lady wife was known there from a child, as ~~and~~ her folk had been before her. The old "riding Rutherfords of Hermiston," of whom she was the last, had been famous men of yore, ill husbands to their wives, ill neighbours in the country, ~~a blackguard~~ a high- and heavy-handed race ~~blackguard.~~ Tales of them were rife in twenty miles about; ~~and some of them had sneaked into the chronicles of Scotland, little enough to their repute;~~ even found their way one was hanged at his peel-door by James the ~~Vth~~ Fifth; one had fallen dead in a carouse with Tam Dalyell; a third, and that was Jean's own father, died at a sitting of a Hell-fire

Club he had founded in Crossmichael. At that very hour he had ten pleas going, eight of them oppressive and three before the inner house.

(Final Version as Printed)

CHAPTER I

LIFE AND DEATH OF MRS. WEIR

The Lord Justice-Clerk was a stranger in that part of the country: but his lady wife was known there from a child, as her race had been before her. The old "riding Rutherfords of Hermiston," of whom she was the last descendant, had been famous men of yore, ill neighbours, ill subjects, and ill husbands to their wives, though not their properties. Tales of them were rife for twenty miles about; and their name was even printed in the page of our Scots histories, not always to their credit. One bit the dust at Flodden; one was hanged at his peel-door by James the Fifth; another fell dead in a carouse with Tom Dalyell; while a fourth (and that was Jean's own father) died presiding at a Hell-fire Club, of which he was the founder. . . . In all these generations, while a male Rutherford was in the saddle with his lads or brawling in a change-house, there would be always a white-faced wife immured at home in the old peel or the later mansion-house. It seemed this succession of martyrs bided long, but took their vengeance in the end, and that was in the person of the last descendant, Jean. She bore the name of the Rutherfords, but she was the daughter of their trembling wives. At the first she was not wholly without charm. Neighbours recalled in her, as a child, a strain of elfin wilfulness, gentle little mutinies, sad little gaieties, even a morning gleam of beauty that was not to be fulfilled. She withered in the growing, and (whether it was the sins of her sires or the sorrows of her mothers) came to her maturity depressed, and, as it were, defaced; no blood of life in her, no grasp or gaiety; pious, anxious, tender, tearful, and incompetent. . . .

The heresy about foolish women is always punished, I have said, and Lord Hermiston began to pay the penalty at once. His house in George Square was wretchedly ill-guided; nothing answerable to the expense of maintenance but the cellar, which was his own private care. When

things went wrong at dinner, as they continually did, my lord would look up the table at his wife: "I think these broth would be better to sweem in than to sup." . . .

When the Court rose that year and the family returned to Hermiston, it was a common remark in all the country that the lady was sore failed.

APPENDIX F

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE WRITINGS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

This catalogue is not in any sense a bibliography, but is intended to show as completely as possible the sequence of all Stevenson's printed writings. When any piece had been written or even begun long before it was printed, both dates have been given; otherwise it must be assumed that the manuscript went to press without delay. For obvious reasons no unprinted work has been included, nor have I cared to include ephemeral articles of no importance or trivial letters to newspapers. I should rather apologise for inclusions than for omissions, but it is difficult to draw any different line with precision.

I have used a table drawn up by Mrs. Thomas Stevenson, and am also under special obligation to Mr. Colvin's invaluable notes prefixed to the volumes of the Edinburgh Edition, but in every case where it was possible, I have verified the references anew. I have also, since my list was completed, seen the bibliography by Mr. E. D. North in the (New York) *Bookman* for September, 1896.

Capital letters denote the first publication in book or pamphlet form; italics the place of first magazine or periodical publication, and also the collected volume in which the piece was afterwards included.

1866.

THE PENTLAND RISING. Anonymous. Published by Andrew Elliot, Edinburgh. Dated 28th November, 1866. 22 pp. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

† Published or republished in Great Britain in the limited Edinburgh Edition only, and in the case of *Miscellanea* in *A Stevenson Medley*. Chatto & Windus, 1899. Limited edition of 300 copies only. In America the Thistle Edition, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1895–98, has the same contents as the Edinburgh.

H. In collaboration with Mr. W. E. Henley.

O. In collaboration with Mr. Lloyd Osbourne.

1868.

The Charity Bazaar : an Allegorical Dialogue. 4 pp. Privately printed. *Miscellanea*,† 1898.

1869.

VERSE.

The Lightkeeper. *Miscellanea*,† 1898.
To Minnie. No. VIII. *Underwoods*, 1887.

1870.

A Retrospect. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

VERSE.

The Lightkeeper. Another copy of verses. *Miscellanea*,† 1898.

1870–71.

Five Sketches : The Satirist, Nuits Blanches, The Wreath of Immortelles, Nurses, A Character. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

1871.

Cockermouth and Keswick. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.
Six Papers. *Edinburgh University Magazine*, January–April, 1871. One of these, An Old Scots Gardener, was republished in a revised form in *Memories and Portraits*, 1887. The other five are reprinted in *Juvenilia*,† 1896. Edinburgh Students in 1824, The Modern Student considered Generally, The Philosophy of Umbrellas (with J. W. Ferrier), Debating Societies, An Old Scots Gardener, The Philosophy of Nomenclature.
On a New Form of Intermittent Light for Lighthouses. Printed in the *Transactions of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts*, 1871, and in *Miscellanea*,† 1898.

1873.

Memories of Colinton Manse. See vol. i. page 47 *sqq.*
The Thermal Influence of Forests. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Miscellanea*,† 1898.
On Roads. *Portfolio*, December. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

1874.

Ordered South. *Macmillan's Magazine*, May. *Virginibus Puerisque*, 1881.

Lord Lytton's "Fables in Song" (review). *Fortnightly Review*, June. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

Victor Hugo's Romances. *Cornhill Magazine*, August. *Familiar Studies*, 1882.

Movements of Young Children. *Portfolio*, August. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

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1886.

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A Christmas Sermon. December. *Across the Plains*, 1892.

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H. Deacon Brodie. Revised version; privately printed.

VERSE.

The Song of Rahéro. Published in *Ballads*, 1891.

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To an Island Princess. XXVIII. *Songs of Travel*, 1895.

1889.

THE MASTER OF BALLANTRAE. Published in September by Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; Cassell & Co., London.

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VERSE.

In Memoriam E. H. *Scots Observer*, 11th May. *Songs of Travel*, 1895.

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1890.

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THE SOUTH SEAS: a Record of Three Cruises. Privately printed. (The first fifteen of the five-and-thirty letters afterwards published as *In the South Seas*. Edinburgh and Thistle editions, 1896. Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1896; Chatto & Windus, London, 1900.)

VERSE.

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1891.

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VERSE.

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1893.

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The Isle of Voices. *National Observer*, 4th–25th February. *Island Nights' Entertainments.*

ISLAND NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS. Published in April by Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York ; Cassell & Co., London.

O. The Ebb Tide. *To-Day*, November, 1893–February, 1894.
St. Ives. Begun in January.
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A Family of Engineers. In course of writing. Edinburgh Edition, 1896.†
Genesis of the Master of Ballantrae. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.
Random Memories: "Rosa quo Locorum." *Juvenilia*,† 1896.
Letter on Samoan Affairs. *Pall Mall Gazette*, 4th September.†
Vailima Prayers. See vol. ii. page 232. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

VERSE.

"God, if this were faith." No. xxv. *Songs of Travel*, 1895.

1894.

O. THE EBB TIDE. Published in September by Messrs. Stone & Kimball, Chicago; Heinemann, London.
My First Book: Treasure Island. The *Idler*, August. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.
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Vailima Prayers. See vol. ii. page 232. *Juvenilia*,† 1896.

APPENDIX G

It is one thing to yield a cold assent to the fact that Stevenson formed himself, as he has told us,[1] on many writers: it is another to realise by actual specimens the power which he acquired of using their styles at will. I have taken at random a dozen examples — nine from Stevenson himself, and three from his originals. I have touched neither French nor Latin sources, and even in English I might have taken half a dozen or a dozen more; but these will serve. They are all from serious work: I have not gone to the "Tushery" of *The Black Arrow* or the holiday burlesque of Ouida, nor to deliberate reproductions like the king's daughter, "who had no care for the morrow and no power upon the hour." Often it is but the sudden glimpse of an author, always, it seems to me, the one most appropriate for the occasion, and then Stevenson returns to his own medium, which is either original or else so compounded that the ingredients can no longer be discerned. Its strength is shown by this, that the best passages are the most individual. If it is all imitation of somebody else, I should be glad to know where to find other works in the style, for instance, of those introductions, that were the only reading of Thomas Stevenson in his latest and darkest hours; or in the style of the four Scottish novels, culminating in the *Weir of Hermiston*, so nobly praised by T. E. Brown: "If the century runs out upon this final chord, what more do I want? Let me die with the sough of it in my ears. It is enough: *Nunc dimittis, Domine.*"

Stevenson took the best wherever he found it; that he rendered it to the world again with interest, even some of the following examples will show:—

A. After the first day, although sometimes I was hurt and distant in manner, I still kept my patience; and as for her, poor soul! she had come to regard me as a god. She loved to eat out of my hand. She was patient, elegant in form, the colour of an ideal mouse, and inimitably small. Her faults were those of her age and sex; her virtues were her own. Farewell, and if for ever —

[1] See vol. i. p. 119.

Father Adam wept when he sold her to me; after I had sold her in my turn, I was tempted to follow his example; and being alone with a stage-driver and four or five agreeable young men, I did not hesitate to yield to my emotion.

B. To be over-wise is to ossify; and the scruple-monger ends by standing stockstill.

C. "We guard this mudbag like a jewel," Otto sneered.

D. At one bound, the sun had floated up; and her startled eyes received day's first arrow, and quailed under the buffet. On every side, the shadows leaped from their ambush and fell prone. The day was come, plain and garish; and up the steep and solitary eastern heaven, the sun, victorious over his competitors, continued slowly and royally to mount.

E. The Admirable Crichton was a person of prodigious capacity, but there is no proof (that I know) that he had an atom of genius. His verses that remain are dull and sterile. He could learn all that was known of any subject; he could do anything if others could show him the way to do it. This was very wonderful; but that is all you can say of it. It requires a good capacity to play well at chess; but, after all, it is a game of skill, and not of genius.

F. Skelt . . . stamped himself upon my immaturity. The world was plain before I knew him, a poor penny world; but soon it was all coloured with romance. If I go to the theatre to see a good old melodrama, 't is but Skelt a little faded. If I visit a bold scene in nature, Skelt would have been bolder; there had been certainly a castle on that mountain, and the hollow tree — that set piece — I seem to miss it in the foreground.

G. . . . the building up of the city on a misty day, house above house, spire above spire, until it was received into a sky of softly glowing clouds, and seemed to pass on and upwards, by fresh grades and rises, city beyond city, a New Jerusalem, bodily scaling heaven.

H. As if gamesome winds and gamesome youths were not sufficient, it was the habit to sling these feeble luminaries from house to house above the fairway. There, on invisible cordage, let them swing! And suppose some crane-necked general to go speeding by on a tall charger, spurring the destiny of nations, red-hot in expedition, there

would indubitably be some effusion of military blood, and oaths, and a certain crash of glass; and while the chieftain rode forward with a purple coxcomb, the street would be left to original darkness, unpiloted, unvoyageable, a province of the desert night.

I. And then suddenly raising his arms, flapping his fingers, and crying out twice, "I must not speak, I must not speak!" he ran away in front of me, and disappeared. . . .

J. To oversee all the details yourself in person; to be at once pilot and captain, and owner and underwriter; to buy and sell and keep the accounts; to read every letter received, and write and read every letter sent; to superintend the discharge of imports night and day; to be upon many parts of the coast almost at the same time; to be your own telegraph, unweariedly sweeping the horizon, speaking all passing vessels bound coastwise; . . . taking advantage of the results of all exploring expeditions, using new passages and all improvements in navigation; charts to be studied, the position of reefs and new lights and buoys to be ascertained, and ever, and ever, the logarithmic tables to be corrected, for by the error of some calculator the vessel often splits upon a rock that should have reached a friendly pier,—there is the untold fate of La Perouse; universal science to be kept pace with, studying the lives of all great discoverers and navigators, great adventurers and merchants, from Hanno and the Phœnicians down to our own day.

K. "It is better to sit here by this fire," answered the girl, . . . "and be comfortable and contented, though nobody thinks about us."

"I suppose," said her father, after a fit of musing, "there is something natural in what the young man says; and if my mind had been turned that way, I might have felt just the same. It is strange, wife, how his talk has set my head running on things that are pretty certain never to come to pass."

L. He was still puzzling over the case of the curate, and why such ill words were said of him, and why, if he were so merry-spirited, he should yet preach so dry, when coming over a knowe, whom should he see but Janet, sitting with her back to him, minding her cattle! He was always a great child for secret, stealthy ways, having been employed by his mother on errands when the same was necessary; and he came behind the lass without her hearing.

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